

THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD IN EGYPT AND JORDAN: A HISTORY OF
MODERN ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

by

Jason Wessel

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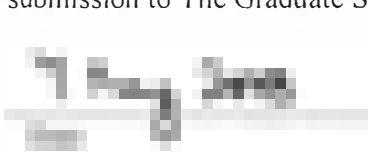
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Approved for the Major Department



Fernando Rubio
Chair/Dean

Approved for the Graduate Council



David S. Chapman
Dean of The Graduate School

ABSTRACT

The Muslim Brotherhood has played a significant role in the history of the Middle East in the twentieth century. The organization was founded on religious fundamentalist principals striving to ensure that Islam would remain the cornerstone of Middle Eastern society. Yet the social and political events of the twentieth century ensured that the Muslim Brotherhood had very different experiences in different countries. In Egypt they faced repression, imprisonment and often violent confrontation with the government. This situation in turn led to an escalation of the Brotherhood's tactics and a radicalization of the organization. In Jordan the Brotherhood achieved a symbiotic relationship with the monarchy, exchanging support for legitimacy. This situation led to stability, continued moderation in the organization's platform and an increased influence over Jordanian society. A lesson that can be learned from comparing the Muslim Brotherhoods' experiences in Egypt and Jordan is that allowing moderate fundamentalist organizations a limited role in society with access to the public is a more effective means of ensuring peace and stability than attempting to suppress the fundamentalist organizations.

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PREFACE

Since the first appearance of ‘political Islam’ on the world stage in the late 1960s and 1970s, journalists and others have described the phenomenon using terms such as ‘fundamentalist’, ‘radical’ and ‘extremist’ more or less interchangeably. To complicate matters further, Muslim scholars use a different vocabulary to describe the same thing. For example, an Arab scholar would describe the Muslim Brotherhood as a radical organization or an extremist religious group but not a fundamentalist organization since fundamentalism is a Western concept.¹ An Arab scholar might refer to the original Muslim Brotherhood as a *salafi* movement, thus giving a very clear and nuanced definition in Arabic, which a Western scholar may translate as extreme fundamentalism. Therefore, in the face of definition and translation problems it is necessary to define a number of the terms that will be used throughout.

For the purposes of this thesis, ‘fundamentalism’ will be defined as a wide-ranging movement or tendency which aims to purge Islam of the various modifications it has endured over the centuries and return it to what it considers to be the original principles of early Islam. This can include the *Salafiyya* movement, which seeks to return to the ways and teachings of the Prophet and his companions (the ‘pious generation’, *al-salaf al-salih*) avoiding the accumulations of later generations, and

¹ Abdel Azim Ramadan, “Fundamentalist Influence in Egypt,” in Martin E. Marty and Scott Appleby (eds.), *Fundamentalism and the State*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993, p. 152.

purportedly not deviating from the Qur'an and the Sunna. However, it can also refer to those who wish to strip away the more recent excesses of the Muslim religion in order to find a way to reconcile the core principles of Islam with the modern world. The Muslim Brotherhood is a fundamentalist organization founded on this second principle.

'Radicalization' will be used in the sense of embracing violent revolutionary tactics.

'Extremism' will refer to those who radicalize and adopt violent revolution as the policy of their organization. Other less frequently used words will be defined in the body of the text.

This thesis will be divided into three sections. First, I will examine the historic evolution of Islamic fundamentalist ideology and the jurists who have shaped the course of modern fundamentalist thought. Second, I will outline the historic experiences of the Muslim Brotherhood and its relationship to the state in both Egypt and Jordan. I will conclude with an analysis of the distinctly different approaches that the Egyptian and Jordanian governments have employed in their relations with the Brotherhood and attempt to recommend what I hope might be an effective strategy for secular states to employ in their relations with Islamic fundamentalist organizations.

Finally, while discussing the premise for this thesis with several colleagues I have encountered skepticism and sometimes even outright hostility to the idea of accommodating Islamic fundamentalism. This has led me to believe that a reader may misinterpret my intentions with this paper. This is not an apologetic attempt to defend the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic fundamentalism. I am in no way justifying or excusing the violence occasionally employed by the Muslim Brotherhood. Furthermore, I am not outlining a path that could lead to fundamentalists eventually gaining control of the

government. An Egyptian version of the Islamic Republic of Iran would be a bad thing for the Egyptian people and for the region. What I am trying to do is demonstrate how allowing limited participation in government and society can prevent moderate Islamic fundamentalist groups from radicalizing and embracing violent tactics and revolutionary rhetoric. Furthermore, a government can use limited inclusion as a tool to control the message and to marginalize the power of the fundamentalist groups in society while maintaining peace and stability.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout Islamic history there has been a tendency on the part of many Muslims, when confronted with what they consider to be an external threat to their power or sovereignty, to develop religious organizations that advocate a retreat into *fundamentalism*. Such organizations believe that Islamic society has lost its way and that what is required to set it back on the ‘straight path’ are reforms whose general themes hark back to the original ways and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and the first generation of rightly guided caliphs (roughly 610-661). Historically, such movements have generally involved only a small minority of the population, but they were often regarded as highly subversive by the ruling powers, who generally reacted with repression, discrimination and violence. This combination of reprisals by the authorities and a general lack of broad societal support frequently encouraged the fundamentalist movements to radicalize and become more extreme.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the ideology, function and historical development of the Muslim Brotherhood, a fundamentalist Islamic, and would-be pan-Islamic, organization founded by Hasan al-Banna in Egypt in 1928. The Brotherhood spread out from Egypt and gradually established independent ‘national’ branches

throughout the Middle East. I will use the experiences of the Muslim Brotherhood and their interaction with the state, using Egypt and Jordan as case studies, in order to demonstrate that the repressive measures and the reprisals carried out by the Egyptian government against the Brotherhood have led to violence, terrorism and in general to profound instability. Meanwhile, the relative tolerance and inclusiveness toward the Brotherhood demonstrated by the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan has led to a largely stable, peaceful and symbiotic relationship. The monarchy has allowed the Muslim Brotherhood limited political participation, but has always ensured that the organization remained a minority in government. In return, the Brotherhood in Jordan has, over time, significantly altered its philosophy and ideology to accommodate government policies.

Essentially, it seems that a state's best response to the emergence of a fundamentalist socio-religious movement is to allow it limited inclusion in the political system before rejection or persecution leads it to radicalize and become a threat to the power structure of the regime or the peace and stability of the society. The more inclusive approach accomplishes three things. First, it provides the fundamentalists with a platform giving them access to the public from which they can deliver their message, thus making participation in the system more appealing than opposition to it. Second, the state gains legitimacy by incorporating the fundamentalists into the system and getting the fundamentalists to play by the state's rules. Third, this access to the public and to the government through incorporation into the system has tended to head off radicalization and extremism in fundamentalist movements.

Overview of the Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood is an interesting case study in the history of religiously oriented organizations. Initially the Brotherhood was an organization founded upon a form of Islamic nationalism that emerged from the political tensions of nineteenth and twentieth century Egypt. Previous fundamentalist Islamic scholars influenced its motivation and objectives, yet they were not backward looking and reactionary.¹ It was primarily influenced by three factors. First, it was an Islamic response, through gradual social and economic reform programs, to the Western (and to some extent Christian) influences of the nineteenth century that were engaged in the gradual Westernization and modernization of Muslim society. Second, the nationalist ideology of the Brotherhood led it to develop as an anticolonial movement entirely opposed to the foreign domination of Egypt. Third, the Brotherhood sought to navigate an Islamic path through the intellectual conflict between conservatism and modernism.² To further clarify this point, prior to the twentieth century, Islamic fundamentalist organizations were almost exclusively conservative and traditionalist in orientation. The experiences of the Muslim world in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the decline in the relative power of the Ottoman empire compared to the Western powers as well as the colonialism of the mandates, led to an intellectual debate within the Muslim world concerning the need to modernize society versus the desire to retain traditional conservative Islamic social values. The Muslim Brotherhood sought to discover an Islamic path that could

¹ This will be elaborated upon below in Chapter II, The Intellectual Origins of Islamic Fundamentalism.

² Christina Harris. *Nationalism and Revolution in Egypt* (The Hague: The Hoover Institution, 1964), p. 14.

accommodate Western style modernization programs while retaining traditional fundamentalist ideologies. This willingness to accept modernization indicates that the Muslim Brotherhood was innovative and revolutionary among Islamic fundamentalist organizations.

The Muslim Brotherhood has branches throughout the Muslim world yet lacks a central directing authority. Though each branch is founded upon basically the same guiding principles as the original core Egyptian organization, all are locally organized and locally directed. This situation allows us to observe how each branch interacted with the governments and political situation in their respective countries and document the consequences of these interactions. This study will analyze the relationships between the Egyptian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood with their respective governments. My goal is to compare and contrast the largely repressive and violent methods of the Egyptian government with the much less confrontational relationship between the Hashemite monarchy and the Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in order to demonstrate that allowing limited participation in government and civil society is probably the most effective means of preventing Islamic fundamentalist organizations from radicalizing and adopting an extremist position that promotes insurrection.

CHAPTER II

THE INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS OF ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

In order to understand the motives and goals of the Muslim Brotherhood it is first necessary to examine the evolution of Islamic fundamentalist thought. Twentieth century Islamic fundamentalism arose largely in response to the Islamic community's dual need to address both modernity and colonialism. The eclipse of the Ottoman Empire by Western Europe brought up some troubling questions for the religious community. The modern world, represented by the Western powers, was an alien culture to the Muslim world. Secularism, nationalism and liberalism were foreign concepts not at all conducive to the traditional Islamic environment, yet these foreign ideologies were overwhelming the Muslim world. This sense of being besieged, of having one's entire worldview called into question, lent this debate a great sense of urgency. The modern Islamic fundamentalist had to find a way to create a modern Islam that could exist in this environment without betraying the core values of the faith. Before examining the Muslim Brotherhood's efforts to address this crisis we must first explore what the core "traditional" values of Islamic fundamentalism are, how they have evolved and how they influenced Islamic fundamentalist organizations in the twentieth century.

Ibn Taymiyya

The cornerstone of much of modern Islamic fundamentalist thought and practice can be traced back to the thirteenth century Muslim theologian Taqi al-Din ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328). Ibn Taymiyya was born in Harran, near the present day border between Turkey and Syria. As a child he and his family were forced to flee to Damascus to escape the Mongol invasions. The history of these Mongol campaigns is relevant to this chapter because it had a profound psychological impact upon Ibn Taymiyya. In 1258, a few years before his birth, the great Islamic city of Baghdad was destroyed. In his lifetime, Damascus was sacked, Jerusalem attacked and enemies intent on destroying it surrounded the Muslim world. The belief that God had forsaken the Muslim people and that the end of the civilized world was at hand would have been widely preached. This situation would greatly influence Ibn Taymiyya's philosophy.

The Mongols had the ultimate goal of conquering Egypt. The second incarnation of the 'Abbasid Empire was an obstacle to this and needed to be conquered as well. The Mongols began invading Greater Syria in 1253, sacking Baghdad in 1258. Circumventing most of Syria and passing through Central Asia, they reached as far west as present day Turkey and into Gaza, in Palestine where they allied with the Christian Crusader states against the 'Abbasids. However, the commanding general Hulagu withdrew with most of his forces following the Great Khan's death back in Mongolia. Later, Hulagu, now a Khan himself, had the remaining forces he had left behind in Syria resume the invasion of Syria. In 1260 the Muslim Egyptian Mamluks defeated the

Mongol forces at the Battle of Ayn Jalut. Less than a year later the Mongols were again defeated at the Battle of Homs and completely expelled from Syria.³ However, the Mongols would remain in control of Persia and would periodically mass forces in order to invade Syria. For example, in 1299 the Mongols defeated a Mamluk army at the battle of Wadi al-Khazander, causing the majority of the population of Damascus to flee the city before it was sacked.⁴ However, even though the Mongols controlled the area for several months and raided as far afield as Gaza and Jerusalem, this campaign to take Syria was also short-lived. The Mongol forces faced their final defeat by the Mamluks at the Battle of Shaqhab in 1303.⁵

The Mongols had pagan, polytheistic and animistic-based religious beliefs (although Hulagu's wife was a Nestorian Christian) and a reputation for the wholesale massacre of every living thing in areas that attempted to resist them. The Mongols had brought about the fall of the 'Abbasid caliphate in 1258, which was followed by the virtually complete destruction of Baghdad. Irrigation systems were destroyed, mosques torn down, libraries burnt and many thousands of people in the city were killed. To a devout Muslim, the inability of the Muslims to stand against these godless barbarians was viewed as a punishment from God for the collective sins of their society. The success of the Mongols and the subjugation of the Muslims was viewed by many as the end of

³ J.J. Saunders, *The History of the Mongol Conquests* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1971) pp. 119-139.

⁴ Adh-Dhahabi, *Record of the Destruction of Damascus by the Mongols in 1299-1301* Translated by Joseph Somogyi. From: Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume, Part 1 Ed. Samuel Lowinger and Joseph Somogyi, Budapest, 1948.

⁵ Saunders, pp. 119-121.

civilization. This forced many to reevaluate themselves and focus upon their spiritual identity.

After the failure of the initial Mongol invasions, the Mongols began to adopt some aspects of the cultures that they had conquered in Persia, often incorporating Turkic and Muslim people into their military. This was formalized with the conversion to Islam of the Ilkhan ruler Ghazan (r. 1295-1304) to Islam in 1296. However, this did not put an immediate end to the Mongol conquest of the Arab world as demonstrated in the campaign discussed above that ended in 1303 at the battle of Shaqhab.⁶ This means they were killing fellow Muslims, a sin explicitly forbidden in the Qur'an. Anger at this hypocrisy and bastardization of the Islamic faith was the catalyst that helped to form Ibn Taymiyya's philosophy.

The external threat the empire faced instigated a desire to purify the faith and to purge the faith of the false Muslims or those who had converted but failed to fully adopt all of the tenets of Islam, Specifically the Mongols who settled in Persia and the Turkic nomadic populations. Essentially, throughout Ibn Taymiyya's life, non-Muslim enemies were determined to destroy the Muslim Empire and it seemed as if the heart of Islam itself was under siege. Mongols and their allies controlled the formerly Muslim Persian Empire to the east and the Central Asian lands to the north. Crusader states dotted the Palestinian coast and the English, French and German Christians seemed determined to capture Jerusalem and Egypt. Ibn Taymiyya lived during a period of intense and

⁶ Saunders, pp. 126-39.

prolonged crisis for the Muslim world and this atmosphere greatly influenced his philosophy.

Ibn Taymiyya's father and grandfather were both respected theologians with whom pious Muslims would consult on spiritual matters. Ibn Taymiyya followed in their footsteps and quickly demonstrated an aptitude and genius for the field. He rapidly developed a reputation as an uncompromising conservative religious authority. He would kick over the gaming tables of strangers in the street. He had an amazing ability to offend powerful people with ties to the local leadership; he was imprisoned many times over the years and ultimately died in the prison of the citadel of Damascus. However, he also inspired a core of loyal followers.

In 1282 he replaced his father as a professor of Hanbali law in Damascus. In Damascus, and later Cairo, he professed that the true path of Islam was not to be found in the contemporary teachings of the *'ulama*. He claimed that the true path had been abandoned and distorted by not adhering strictly and exclusively to the *Qur'an* and the *hadith*, the collections of the words, teachings and accounts of the actions of the prophet Muhammad. The stunning military successes of the impious Mongols, who practiced, at best, an adulterated form of Islam, was God's punishment for abandoning the true path of the Islam and allowing less worthy influences to permeate Islam.

Contemporary Islamic jurists and *'ulama* believed that the gates of *ijtihad*, or interpretation of religious doctrine, were closed. Though there is some debate about the accuracy of this among modern scholars, it remained a matter of official doctrine, if not

the actual practices of the jurists and the ‘ulama.’⁷ This means that the ‘*ulama* were not to search religious texts anew for meaning but rather were expected to rely upon 600 years of established precedent in order to answer religious questions. To Ibn Taymiyya, a personal relationship and interpretation of the religious texts was a prerequisite for enlightenment. These beliefs and practices put Ibn Taymiyya at odds with other contemporary religious authorities and the local rulers who desired peace and stability over an esoteric exploration of the meaning of the State’s religion. In a sense, he was the Muslim equivalent of Martin Luther.

Ibn Taymiyya’s writings were even more controversial than his sermons, since he focused particularly on the political realm. Most members of the Ulama wisely chose to avoid the topic. Ibn Taymiyya, however, believed that the issue of good and righteous governance was integral to Islam.⁸ Essentially, he believed in the restoration of a unified Islamic empire ruled by a “rightly guided” Caliph. In reality, the Muslim world had not been unified under a single ruler since the early ‘Abbasid period.

With fellow religious scholars unwilling to criticize their rulers and the realization that a Caliphate modeled after the seventh century was an impossible dream by the late thirteenth century, Ibn Taymiyya found himself virtually alone leading the call for societal reforms and the return to a purer and more idealized form of Islam. He formulated a unique vision that would, in his opinion, preserve the essence of the era of the rightly guided caliphs in the contemporary political and social context. Recognizing

⁷ Wael Hallaq, ‘Was the Gate of *Ijtihad* closed?’ *IJMES*, 16, 1984 pp. 3-41.

⁸ Michael Cook, *Forbidding Wrong in Islam: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) pp. 145-64.

that there was no longer a divinely chosen leader who embodied supreme religious authority and unchallenged political control, he proposed that the relationship between the ruler and the subjects was a contract under which the Emirs would provide just rule in accordance with Islamic law, and the people would give him their obedience in exchange. However, this contract presupposed the existence of a religious leader who would provide a pious example and give guidance to the people on matters of morality and faith.

The modern Islamic fundamentalists generally interpret this to mean that Ibn Taymiyya believed that the clergy should fill this role, thus endowing the *'ulama* with authority separate from the government. Essentially, by filtering their reading of Ibn Taymiyya through their own contemporary experiences with modern secularism they believe that he had written about a similar situation in the thirteenth century. Based on this faulty supposition modern fundamentalists believe that Ibn Taymiyya wished to reverse a centuries long trend in which the political arena had gradually become more secularized and the religious authorities more marginalized and therefore that he believed that religion should not be subordinate to government and that an impious leader who failed to follow proper Islamic law was no more than an apostate, implying that it would be the sacred duty of all Muslims to depose such a leader. To fail to do, or to follow such a leader, would be a rejection of the Word of God and would be viewed as apostasy as well.

Obviously, the government did not appreciate these radical views. The notion that people not only had a right but a duty to overthrow the government was

unacceptable. This made him an enemy of the government and a hero to the marginalized and disaffected in society.

Another pillar of Ibn Taymiyya's ideology was reemphasizing the concept of *jihad* or holy struggle. He equated the waging of *jihad* with righteous war. *Jihad* had been invoked many times in Islamic history and can be referenced in the Qur'an (Sura 2:190) and (Sura 9:5).⁹ Usually *jihad* is referenced in defense of Islam or Muslim land. But by the late thirteenth century, *jihad* was used as one of many arguments in favor of militaristic expansion, forcefully bringing the enlightenment of Islam to infidels. Prior to this, namely the initial expansion under the Umayyad caliphs, the spread of Islam was not a primary or even secondary goal of the conquest. However, by the time of the establishment of the Sultanate, Arab Muslim culture and society had evolved and developed to the point that imperial territorial expansion was viewed through the lenses of religion. Therefore, by invoking the faith, the argument could be made that it had become the duty of the entire community to assist in raising an army for this purpose.

The modern Islamic fundamentalist interprets Ibn Taymiyya's elevation of the importance of *jihad* as a duty of every Muslim as sanctifying the use of offensive warfare.

In the thirteenth century, warfare was always directed by the political authority, if not the sultan then a provincial governor or other respected individual imbued with executive authority, and was usually a seasonal exercise. However, there was also a defensive form of *jihad*. If Muslim lands were threatened, it became the duty of all

⁹ David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) pp. 5-11.

Muslim individuals to fight in defense of Islam, independent of the political leadership and the community.¹⁰

Ibn Taymiyya elevated *jihad* to the level of one of the five pillars of Islam and declared that it was an essential requirement for all Muslims and that it should always be independent of the political authority. He then took *jihad* a step further and stated that it could be invoked not just for dealing with external enemies but was also appropriate for dealing with internal enemies. Essentially, he advocated invoking *jihad* in order to purge the faith of those perceived as being impious.

To the modern fundamentalist, turning *jihad* inward does two things. First, it allows Muslims to kill ‘impious’ Muslims on the grounds that one is protecting the integrity of the *umma* by punishing apostasy. Second, it creates a mechanism for forcible reform within the Muslim community.¹¹

The Mamluk Sultan used this interpretation of *jihad* in order to wage war against the Muslim Mongols. In the 1320s the Mamluk sultan Nasir commissioned a *fatwa* from Ibn Taymiyya authorizing the campaign. The victory over the Mongols ended the Mongol threat to Syria and resulted in a long-standing peace treaty in 1323. However, in 1517 the Mamlukes were to be defeated by the Ottomans (that is, the replacement of one Muslim dynasty by another stronger one), and in a sense, with the external threat removed, Ibn Taymiyya’s teachings went out of style. Though his philosophy was never mainstream or embraced by the masses, the clear and present danger faced by the

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 57-63.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 65-66.

Mamluk empire made the doom and gloom aspects of his teachings popular among a growing religiously fanatical fringe of society. Also, since his philosophy was generally in conformity with the wider goals of the Sultan it was often expedient to invoke his unique perspective in order to bolster the military campaign against the Mongols. When the threat was removed after the military victory over the Mongols and the conclusion of the peace treaty in 1323, his doomsday philosophy fell out of vogue. However, whenever conditions in the Muslim world seemed similar to those of the thirteenth century, and the people felt threatened by an outside power, there has often been a resurgence of fundamentalist organizations and a revival of Ibn Taymiyya's radical teachings.

The external threat to the Muslim empire by the invading, seemingly unstoppable Mongols and the ensuing self-analysis that the Islamic community went through led to calls for reform. The pious believed that their society had strayed too far away from the true path of Islam and that a return to the ways of the Prophet and his companions was vitally necessary. Ibn Taymiyya had been a firsthand witness of the atrocities suffered by the Muslims under the Mongols. When the Mongols later converted to Islam this tempered and focused his anger against those whom he judged were false Muslims. Out of these feelings emerged a philosophy that advocated the harsh imposition of fundamentalist ideology and violent repression of dissent within the Muslim community that allowed for no tolerance of un-Islamic behavior. Furthermore, it reinforced the standard political theory that the legitimacy of the Muslim rulers was contingent upon their piety and adherence to *shar'ia* law. If the ruler failed to live up to

his responsibilities it was the Muslim people's religious duty to rebel against him or risk apostasy themselves.

'Abd al-Wahhab

The Wahhabi movement that emerged in eighteenth and nineteenth century Arabia was an extreme fundamentalist movement based on the Hanbali school.

The Ottomans ruled the Arab world from 1517 until their collapse at the end of World War I. The Ottomans originated as a regional force around 1300 and expanded first into Europe. They controlled much of the Balkans, capturing Kosovo in 1389 and then expanded into Anatolia, capturing Constantinople in 1453. Despite the opinion that the Ottoman Empire was essentially in a slow and steady decline for five centuries as expressed by Bernard Lewis in *What Went Wrong?*¹² many periods of Ottoman rule can be characterized as prosperous and relatively stable. The central government was firmly in control and there were no real external threats. In fact, the early history of the Ottoman Empire was generally one of expansion. Without a crisis or an external threat to act as a catalyst for self-analysis and instigate a call for fundamentalist reform, the citizens of the Ottoman Empire were content to live life in much the same way as they had for generations. Essentially, there was no significant undercurrent of dissent or public sentiment calling for the reform of society, government or the practice of the faith.

¹² Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong ? The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2002).

However, this gradually began to change in the eighteenth century, with the Empire's slow but growing loss of power and territory in Europe to Russia and Austria, and later its loss of its own economic monopoly to Western European powers that were emerging as colonial and trade oriented power bases. The central government in Istanbul had been losing control of the periphery of the empire, increasingly to both European powers and local warlords in the late eighteenth century. It remained more or less in control of the urban centers, but partly due to financial constraints, had to rely increasingly on local, if not always loyal or dependable, notables to govern and control the rural hinterland. This sense of the weakness of the central government and the "decline of civilization" in general caused the beginning of the stirrings of movements that could trace their intellectual ancestry more or less explicitly to Ibn Taymiyya.

One of the most prominent and influential of these new fundamentalists was Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, who was born in 1703 in the village al-'Uyayna in Najd in present day Saudi Arabia. He was descended from a line of Islamic judges and went through formal religious training in Medina and Baghdad. He developed a reputation for extreme and radical ideas. For example, while still a young man studying at a seminary in Basra he was thrown out for accusing the entire population of apostasy. al-Wahhab continued his religious studies by traveling east to Isfahan and Qum in Persia. This broad course of study across the Muslim world exposed him to many different approaches to Islam. This experience directly led to al-Wahhab formulating an interpretation of an unadulterated Islam, based upon his conception of the true Islam of

its seventh-century founders. His interpretation of Islam was stripped of all innovation and reinterpretation.

al-Wahhab believed in the primacy of monotheism, the denunciation of all forms of meditation between God and worshippers and believed that a true Muslim was required to pay a religious tax to the leader of the community. Furthermore, al-Wahhab believed that it was the obligation of a Muslim to engage in *jihad* against anyone who did not conform to these principles.¹³

When al-Wahhab began to develop a following he promoted the teachings of Ibn Taymiyya and reestablished respect for his teachings among the new fundamentalist movements and those movements that would follow, essentially rescuing Ibn Taymiyya from the dustbin of history. Like Ibn Taymiyya, al-Wahhab focused upon the Qur'an and the *hadith* and rejected later practices. He also attacked the folk customs that had become an integral element of rural society and had taken on quasi-religious significance, such as visiting the tombs, venerating saints, leaving food offerings for the dead, etc.¹⁴ He further denounced Sufism and Shi'ism as being un-Islamic, believing that such practices should be punished by death.¹⁵ He and his followers would desecrate popular shrines in protest.¹⁶ al-Wahhab viewed innovation (*bid'a*) as the path to sin and believed that innovation had perverted the message of Islam, returning society to *jahiliyya*, the age of barbarism that preceded the Prophet. al-Wahhab believed it was necessary to avoid all

¹³ Madawi al-Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). p. 16.

¹⁴ Alexei Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia*, (New York: New York University Press, 2000). pp. 77-78 & Rasheed, pp. 17-18.

¹⁵ Cook, p. 75.

¹⁶ Vasiliev, pp. 77-78.

forms of *shirk*, polytheism, and to reform society to bring it back to the true path of Islam. One of his most significant contributions to Islamic jurisprudence was his liberal use of *takfir*, or the process of denouncing a Muslim as an infidel for not adhering strictly to the faith.¹⁷ Radical militant fundamentalist groups would revive this practice in the 1970s and 1980s with violent results.

The increasingly radical opinions and actions of al-Wahhab and his followers led to his expulsion from al-‘Uyayna by the local political leadership in 1744. He relocated to the village of Dara‘iya at the invitation of the Shaykh Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud (r. 1735-65), whose wife was one of his supporters. This would lead to the development of a remarkable partnership that has lasted to the present day, the formation of a symbiotic relationship that helped each side achieve its goals. The Sa‘udis gained political power and territorial control while the “Wahhabis” were allowed to carry out their program of radical reform throughout the newly acquired land. When Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud died in 1765, much of the Arabian peninsula had been consolidated under Sa‘udi control and ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s version of Islam reigned supreme.¹⁸

The Sa‘ud family and the Wahhabis continued their partnership; Sa‘udi armies, led first by ‘Abd al-‘Aziz b. Muhammad (1765-1803) and then by his son Sa‘ud (1803-1814), conquered most of central and eastern Arabia by 1792, acquired Bahrain and Qatar by 1797, sacked the Shi‘i holy city of Karbala’ in 1802, occupied the Hijaz,

¹⁷ Cook, p. 75.

¹⁸ Cook, p. 86.

including Mecca and Medina, by 1803-1804.¹⁹ They also raided Iraq and Syria in the early nineteenth century, forcing the Ottomans into series of confrontations in which they were eventually pushed back. The Sa'ud family's fortunes declined throughout much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries but the Saudi-Wahhabi alliance continued to thrive.²⁰

Ultimately, the doctrines of the Wahhabi movement showed similarities with those of Ibn Taymiyya, with the important difference that al-Wahhab managed to put his fundamentalist reform project at the service of a politically and territorially expansionist regime. This combination of political and military strength combined with an uncompromising religious devotion would be a model that future extremist groups would attempt to recreate in the late twentieth century.

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838?-1897) was most likely born in Asadabad, Iran, although, since he would have more resonance politically as a Sunni than as a Shi'i, he claimed to be from Afghanistan. He was the first modern Muslim activist to attempt to utilize the power of Islam specifically in the political arena. His goals were essentially political, but he recognized the power of religion and made use of it. Moreover, by recognizing the appeal of Islam, he was able to integrate his calls for internal reform into a 'religious' argument: in order to confront the challenge of the West, it would be

¹⁹Vassiliev, pp. 83-111.

²⁰Cook, p. 86.

necessary to reform society and Islam itself, which he determined to have become debased by poor leadership.

Afghani recognized that foreign influence and sometimes even outright foreign control of civil society, economic policies and even occasionally some of the governments of the Muslim world were occurring throughout the Muslim world. This situation alarmed and outraged Afghani. Therefore, he emphasized the political side of Islam as an anti-imperialist doctrine that would help revive “national pride” and mobilize the Muslim world to resist Western interference. al-Afghani argued strongly against the idea of the creation of individual Muslim national states, and called for a single Islamic state, the unification of all countries with an Islamic tradition. His approach was a break with tradition, calling for the restoration of purified Islamic values and the unification of all Muslims in defense of Islam.

al-Afghani traveled widely throughout the Islamic world and Europe, gaining first-hand knowledge of the conditions of European progress and Muslim subjugation. He instigated a life-long campaign of political agitation that took him from Iran to Afghanistan, India, Egypt, France, Britain and Russia. He served at the Qajar court and eventually at the Ottoman court in Istanbul. Everywhere he went, he counseled leaders, led religious and political demonstrations against Western imperialism and its local allies, and called for external unity and internal reform of the Islamic world.

As a political program, Pan-Islam was no match for the challenges and opportunities of the newly developing world of nations. Instead, one of the major new developments that emerged from the collaboration between al-Afghani and his disciple

Muhammed ‘Abduh was the emergence of Islamic modernism, in which people in a number of areas worked to create an effective synthesis of Islam and modernity. In addition, although indirectly and unintentionally, al-Afghani laid the basis for later radical Islam or Islamic fundamentalism.

Ultimately, the pan-Islamic movement was a calculated political maneuver that used Islam as the primary tool in an attempt to unify the diverse Muslim peoples of Asia and Africa to combat Western territorial and political encroachment on the Muslim world. The relative decline in power of the Ottoman and Persian Empires when compared to the Western Empires demanded that drastic reforms take place. Modernization and the adoption of certain Western institutions were essential to the survival and the success of these civilizations. However, they risked losing their culture through assimilation to Western ideals. al-Afghani wished to thread the needle by reasserting the fundamental religious ties that defined Muslims as separate from and superior to the West while adopting many of the technologies, sciences, military and bureaucratic structures of the West.

Attempts to unify the Muslim people under a single banner failed. Nevertheless in Iran, the Tobacco Revolt of 1891, the assassination of Nasser ed-Din Shah in 1898, and the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-09 can all be traced to al-Afghani’s influence. His legacy included anti-imperialism, anti-absolutism, and Islamic reform. To a considerable extent, these legacies converged in the constitutional movements in the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Iran. Many modern Islamist movements have adopted al-Afghani as their founding father and extremist movements have embraced radical

militant Islam as a tool to achieve pan Islamic goals and emphasize the political power of Islam.

One of the earliest Islamic political movements was *Ikhwan al-Muslimin*, the Muslim Brotherhood, established by Hasan al-Banna in 1929. He adopted an absolutely utopian approach towards the problem facing the colonial countries.²¹ The failure of previous anticolonial efforts, and the relentless pressures on nonreligious opposition movements in the Middle East exerted by the Western powers eventually opened the way to the political Islam of the last few decades. Political movements like the Muslim Brotherhood see Islam as a binding social force that transcends the borders of secular nation states, although in practice, members' activities are generally confined to their 'own' countries.²² At the present time, Brotherhood members are actively involved in the politics of Egypt, Jordan Sudan and several other Middle Eastern states. The Muslim Brotherhood will be explained in greater detail in the following chapters.

However, al-Afghani's pan-Islamic political ideology was significantly different from today's political Islam. Islamic nineteenth-century political and social reformers could pursue three different projects: they could strive for a return to fundamentalism, much like the Wahhabis. Second, they could embrace Western-style modernism and accept the gradual secularization of Islamic society. Third, they could reinterpret the basic tenets of Islam in the context of modern rational and liberal thought, that is,

²¹ Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962). p. 114.

²² Thus the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood are not administratively linked. The major exceptions here are the more militant transnational (and usually clandestine) associations like *al-Qa'ida*.

essentially reopening the gate of *ijtihad*.²³ Although not a 'conventional religious scholar' (he had no formal training) al-Afghani chose the third path, thus using religion in order to achieve political goals. Modern Islamic fundamentalist organizations seek to achieve the opposite, to reshape the political arena to conform to their religious interpretation of the world.

al-Afghani's principal disciple was an Egyptian, Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905), who would become one of the primary inspirations for the Muslim Brotherhood. Both al-Afghani and 'Abduh believed that reason, Islam and modern science were compatible, though this required the dismantling of the traditional social, economic, and political institutions of the Muslim world, which had gradually become perversions of true Islam. Whereas 'Abd al-Wahhab had sought a return to a purer form of Islam through emulation of the past, al-Afghani and Abduh sought to find new meaning by interpreting the Qur'an in a modern context.

In Paris, al-Afghani and 'Abduh founded an Islamic society and a journal called *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa*, 'the Indissoluble Bond'. While there, al-Afghani engaged in a running debate with the philosopher Renan. However, 'Abduh would break with al-Afghani in 1892, when the latter returned to Istanbul at the invitation of Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid II. 'Abduh himself returned to Egypt in 1889, and was later appointed Grand Mufti, a position he held until his early death. 'Abduh differed from his mentor in several crucial areas, and in particular was less of a revolutionary and more of a gradualist. He also had a limited role in the Egyptian nationalist movement.

²³ Harris, p. 115.

Another aspect of al-Afghani's pan-Islamic vision was his reinterpretation of the role of leaders in an Islamic society. He argued that

The divisions which have occurred in Muslim States originate only from the failure of rulers who deviate from the solid principles upon which the Islamic faith is built and leave the road which was followed by their early ancestors. When those who rule Islam return to the rules of their law and model their conduct upon that practiced by the early generations of Muslims it will not be long before God gives them extensive power and bestows strength upon them comparable to that wielded by the orthodox caliphs, who were leaders of the faith."²⁴

al-Afghani also believed that leaders should be held accountable for their actions, and argued that limitations on the absolute authority of the ruler are essential to prevent despotism. The people have the right to depose and replace a bad leader. We can observe al-Afghani putting his theory into practice with the assassination of Nasser al-Din Shah, ruler of the Qajar Empire in 1896. This questioning of the leadership rejects the idea of divine right of kings and shares many aspects of the nationalist view of the exceptionality of the nation rather than the king. It also flirts with the democratic principle of popular sovereignty, or rule by the consent of the governed. It also echoes Ibn Taymiyya's teaching that it is the duty of the people to remove a bad leader.

Some of al-Afghani's ideas on the nature of leadership and reform would be highly influential in the prelude to the Iranian constitutional movement of 1905, especially an attempt to prevent absolutism. However, the promise of reform brought by the constitutional revolution collapsed in 1911, when pressures from Britain and Russia combined with powerful internal forces to disband the parliament and suspend the

²⁴ Hourani, p. 114.

constitution. What followed was rule by a series of Bakhtiari chiefs and the reestablishment of the monarchy under Ahmad Shah, and subsequently somewhat more permanently under the Pahlavis.

According to Keddie, al-Afghani's vision of pan-Islam expressed through his writings bore many hallmarks of the traditional definition of nationalism. These include an aggressive cultural defensiveness, a superiority complex in relation to Christianity and a call for a revival of a distant and idealized past.²⁵ His rhetoric was focused upon uniting against Western encroachment under the banner of Islam. Essentially, he wanted the national identity of the *umma* to become Islam. In a sense, al-Afghani tried to use Islam as a political tool in order to bind the people together into a cohesive single nation. As in other nation-building efforts, he accentuated the differences between "us" (Muslims) and "them" (Western imperialists) while downplaying the regional, ethnic, linguistic, class and cultural differences within the national identity he was forging.

Unity around Islam was conducive to this because of the strict separation of identity within Islam: there are Muslims and there are infidels. Cultural differences that existed within Islam, (ethnic, linguistic, geographic) were secondary to religious identity. Specifically, Islam was considered a stronger bond in unity of the *umma* more than any other binding social tie, so that the difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim trumps any other similarities or differences among the Muslim population as a whole. An individual's membership in the community is based upon his/her submission to God and his/her adoption of the faith. Ethnicity, status, birth etc. do not matter. This makes

²⁵ Keddie, pp. 24-25.

identifying the nation easier. It also makes the composition of the pan-Islamic nation fluid. Calls to aid a Muslim country under the yoke of foreign oppression could be a rallying cry in support of ‘our brothers’. However, the people or rulers of a Muslim country willingly cooperating with foreign interests could be characterized as “bad Muslims” and “infidels” and therefore not part of the nation. However, by ignoring or not addressing the differences between the diverse groups that make up the pan-Islamic nation, al-Afghani failed to provide a model that could be implemented beyond the theoretical level. Basically, his rhetoric was appealing but it would be impossible to realize such a far-reaching and all-encompassing plan. Pan-Arabism would face similar problems that would lead to its ultimate failure, but it had an advantage over pan-Islam in that it acknowledged the need to address some of the fundamental differences within the *umma*.

‘Abduh and al-Afghani believed that Muslims must cooperate both to reverse internal decline and to counter European colonialism. They called for a return to the spirit of early Islam and a reinterpretation of the Qur’an to meet the needs of the modern world. They believed that some limited borrowing of Western ideas was permissible and that the use of reason was not in conflict with religious revelation. After ‘Abduh's death his disciple Muhammad Rashid Rida continued to carry and develop the reformist message of al-Afghani and ‘Abduh to the Islamic world.

Muhammed ‘Abduh and Rashid Rida

Muhammad Rashid Rida (September 23, 1865, - August 22, 1935) was born in Tripoli, Syria in 1865, and was an admirer of the writings of Muhammed ‘Abduh. Upon completion of his studies in 1897 he immigrated to Egypt, where he became a disciple of ‘Abduh, eventually becoming his biographer. In fact, much of what is known of the details of ‘Abduh’s life comes from the writings of Rida and at times it becomes difficult to determine to whom to attribute certain ideas and philosophies, although a handful of ideas clearly originated with Rida. Rida supported the restoration of a religious caliphate; while ‘Abduh largely ignored the issue, Rida viewed it as a viable Islamic alternative to Western nationalism. Rida also placed a heavy emphasis on the importance of the *Sayyids* or blood descendants of the Prophet while Abduh did not.²⁶

Like Muhammad ‘Abduh, Rida regarded education as the primary instrument of social change.²⁷ He stressed the importance of incorporating religion into the educational system, ultimately establishing his own school with a curriculum that he designed. This school was aimed at young religious men and counted among its students an impressive list of twentieth-century Muslim leaders.²⁸ The emphasis on the need for religious education would become a cornerstone of the Muslim Brotherhood’s philosophy.

Under the guidance of Muhammad ‘Abduh, Rida established the magazine *al-Manar* (The Lighthouse) in 1898 and continued to publish it for thirty-seven years. In it he spoke for the Salafiyya movement, which combined a form of Islamic modernism with

²⁶ M.A. Zaki Badawi. *The Reformers of Egypt* (London: The Muslim Institute, 1978) pp.101-102.

²⁷ Badawi, p. 116.

²⁸ Ibid.

the search for inspiration in the example of early Islam. It sought to promote social, religious, political and economic reforms that demonstrated that Islam was compatible with contemporary conditions and that the *shar'ia* was a practical judicial tool for a modern government.²⁹ Rida republished many of Afghani and 'Abduh's writings in *al-Manar*. Though Afghani and 'Abduh had been published before, their writings were not well known or widespread, and *al-Manar* introduced them to many sympathetic readers around the world. In a real sense, much of what is known of the teachings of al-Afghani and 'Abduh exists because of the efforts of Rida to continue spreading and expanding upon their ideas after their deaths.

In response to a question in *al-Manar* about the nature of *jihad*, Rida addressed the aspect of the defensive qualities of *jihad* outlined in the Qur'an in the face of the obviously offensive expansion of the first empire in the seventh century. Rida had a very careful answer, positing that the proclamation of the truth is a primary goal of Islam. Non-Islamic neighbors are an obstacle to truth and thus opponents of Islam. Therefore, aggressively removing them by force is, in effect, a defensive act.³⁰ Though the vast majority of Rida's work on *jihad* calls for only limited and defensive warfare and focuses upon truth, this exchange is significant because, though not taken directly from Rida, the interpretation of offensive *jihad* is at the ideological core of modern radical and terrorist Islamic groups, and is their justification for carrying out violent attacks against Western

²⁹ Badawi, p. 99.

³⁰ Cook, p. 96.

civilians and local noncombatants. al Qaeda in Iraq is a perfect example of this principle in practice.

Though Rida echoed his mentor's call for the purification of Islam and the improvement of higher education, he chose to emphasize the need to defend Islam from external attack.³¹ While 'Abduh could be interpreted as being pro-Western (at least with regard to structures and institutions) Rida sought to emphasize the need to eliminate the influences of Western culture without abandoning Western style reforms, including the incorporation of Western sciences and technologies. However, he viewed nationalism with some suspicion, since he associated it with secularism. Though he supported the nationalist goal of ending colonialism in the Muslim world, he viewed the inherently secular nature of nationalism as a threat to the Islamic community. He also believed that the Muslim world was a single entity and that nationalism would lead to the dismemberment of the *umma*.³²

Rida was always an outsider in Egyptian affairs. Though he carried the fundamentalist torch for al-Afghani and 'Abduh he never received the political and social appointments that his predecessors received. This was partly due to his unwavering inflexibility on his positions and partly because of his foreign origin during a period of increasing nationalism. However, through Rida's writings and his preservation of the work of previous writers, twentieth-century Islamic fundamentalism found a message and a voice.

³¹ David Sagiv, *Fundamentalism and Intellectuals in Egypt 1973-1993* (London: Routledge, 1995) p. 23.

³² Badawi, p. 128.

Rida grew more anti-Western after World War I, and exercised a profound influence upon Hasan al-Banna and the Muslim Brethren. His position never wavered and barely evolved over the decades. Ironically, he found himself beginning his career as a radical modernist only to see his position adopted, adapted and passed over by Egyptian nationalists. In effect, he became a traditionalist by default. The reform movement seemed to become increasingly irrelevant as it was eclipsed by the nationalist movement in Egypt. Yet the ideas would remain, to be embraced by another generation.

Conclusion

Ibn Taymiyya believed in restoring a romanticized golden age of Islam, and that the restoration of the caliphate would once again unite all Muslims under a single religiously-based government that possessed the mandate of Heaven. The Caliph would exercise an enlightened rule, based on *shar'ia* law and would reverse the erosion of core Islamic values in society. This belief is a prime example of how extremism develops and evolves. The failure of government of his day to face the external threat of the Mongols was perceived as a punishment from God. If God is punishing the Muslim people it must be because they had failed to be good, pious Muslims and had strayed from the true path of Islam: the way to return to the true path is to reform society using the early days of the faith as a model. Ibn Taymiyya organized and led a minority movement in society that demanded that these changes be made, even though it was based upon a romanticized and glorified interpretation of the past. His fundamentalist followers were never in the majority and faced resistance from the government, the religious elites and mainstream

society. Frustrated, the fundamentalist movement then abandoned rhetoric and persuasion through dialogue and began to explore more radical means of achieving its goals. At this point it assumed an adversarial position in relation to the power structure.

Ultimately, when the Mongol threat was removed, Ibn Taymiyya's movement to recreate the golden age of the first generation of Islam fell into disfavor and was almost forgotten until 'Abd al-Wahhab revived it in the eighteenth century. 'Abd al-Wahhab expanded upon Ibn Taymiyya's teachings and reforged Islamic fundamentalism for his time. Under the Wahhabis, Islamic fundamentalism became fused with religious philosophy in the service of political-territorial expansionist goals. With the emergence of the modern age in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire and Islamic civilization were both in decline. The West continued to outpace the Ottomans in military technology as well as in relative power and wealth, and the periphery of the empire gradually began to break away from Ottoman control. One by one the Ottoman territories in the Arab lands were taken over first by rebellious local forces and then by European occupiers. In Algeria, Tunisia, Sudan, Libya, Egypt, Greater Syria and Iraq, Ottoman rule came to an end.

In the process, the empire fell increasingly in debt to Western banks, and Ottoman institutions became characterized by corruption, inefficiency and patronage. This stagnation and corruption hindered the Ottomans from being able to keep pace with Europe. The reforms in the Ottoman Empire, known as the *tanzimat*, occurred between the years 1839 and 1876 under a number of different sultans and marked attempts to preserve the empire in the face of direct Western competition. In addition, the Ottoman

state sought to redefine itself as a modern, bureaucratic, and tolerant state rather than simply as a Muslim dynasty. These moves alarmed pious Muslims who saw the role of their religion purposely being diminished.

This situation of obvious weakness in the central government provided fertile ground for new calls for reform. Some, like al-Afghani, sought to redefine Islam in modern terms, which included a fundamental shift in the understanding of *jihad*. Instead of actual warfare and violent struggle, *jihad* was perceived as an internal struggle against the evil impulses within an individual's soul. This was called the greater *jihad* with the physically violent struggle now becoming the lesser *jihad*, a concept which would have been completely alien to both Ibn Taymiyya and 'Abd al-Wahhab.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Muslim world had to face the increasing influence of the Western powers, which forced it to reexamine some of its most basic assumptions while compelling it to adopt many alien institutions. al-Afghani and 'Abduh emerged from within this environment, believing that the secret of the West's strength lay in its political and social organization. al-Afghani and 'Abduh sought to find a way to incorporate these structures into a Muslim ideology. Their disciple Rashid Rida had the task of continuing the work of his mentors while being faced with the further development of regional nationalist movements throughout the Arab and Muslim worlds. He preserved the teachings of his mentors and made them available to a wider audience. Islamist radicals today tend to prefer the example of al-Afghani, the relentless activist, to that of 'Abduh, the patient reformer; that they have access to both is largely due to the efforts of Rashid Rida.

Other Muslims during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would reject calls for modernizing Islam, finding their own answers in the teachings of Ibn Taymiyya and ‘Abd al-Wahhab. They borrowed the idea of reforming society and returning to the fundamental practices of the golden age of the first generation (*al-salaf al-salih*). However, their worldview was also colored by the anticolonialist and nationalist sentiments of the time. In addition, many other Islamic jurists and intellectuals inspired the Islamic fundamentalist movement over the centuries, including al-Ghazzali, al-Farabi and Maududi. However, I believe that the core of modern fundamentalist ideology is contained in the writings and teachings of these outlined above. Together, the political philosophies of these five writers are essential to an understanding of modern fundamentalist movements in Islam. Many of the founding principles and core values of the Muslim Brotherhood are directly traceable to the writings of these men.

CHAPTER III

THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD IN EGYPT

Throughout most of the twentieth century, Egypt has suffered sporadic bouts of internal violence caused by confrontations between the government and Islamic militants. The history of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt can be characterized by long periods of an adversarial relationship with the government, characterized by repression and animosity with brief periods of cooperation. For the most part, the Brotherhood has been a nonviolent organization whose long-term goals revolve around bringing about gradual change by winning over the masses through social and educational programs. The stated goal of the Brotherhood is to first prepare the individual, then the society and eventually to achieve an Islamic state.³³ Occasionally, the radical fringe of the organization has engaged in violent activities, but the organization has periodically purged these elements from its ranks. The Egyptian government's reaction to the Brotherhood has seemed entirely out of proportion and counter-productive in any attempt to promote peace and stability in Egypt. The government has feared the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood and sought to curb their successes. In a sense, the Egyptian government has been more concerned with their inability to control the message of the Muslim Brotherhood than

³³ Ramadan, p. 157.

worried about the potential for violent radical rebellion stemming from governmental repression of a popular religious organization.

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt by Hasan al-Banna in 1928. Initially it began as a movement for the reform of individual and social morality. It stressed three things: revival, organization and upbringing. The goal was to transform society into as close an approximation as possible to what the founder believed to be the original Islamic society established in Medina by the Prophet Muhammad in the 620s, there should be no distinction or barriers between religion and government. The Muslim Brotherhood soon expanded its goals to include challenging the secular leadership of all Muslim societies. Its strategy of change was to facilitate the emergence of a ‘more Muslim’ society through grassroots programs in education, charity, and social activities. The Brotherhood stressed the defensive definition of jihad and opposed violent or revolutionary tactics.³⁴

Over time, branches of the Muslim Brotherhood were founded in other Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Kuwait, Syria and Jordan. However, despite the paranoid opinions of some writers, like Robert Baer³⁵ the different branches are only loosely associated with each other and enjoy complete administrative independence.

³⁴ Cook, p. 98.

³⁵ Robert Baer. *Sleeping With the Devil* (New York: Crown, 2003).

The Early History of the Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood's humble origins date from 1928, when six workers employed by the British, in the Suez Canal Zone in Egypt, approached a young schoolteacher named Hasan al-Banna and asked him to become their leader. They had heard him preach in mosques and coffee-houses on the need for a revitalization and renewal of Islam. al-Banna accepted, and the Society of the Muslim Brothers was established.³⁶ al-Banna and his followers began by starting an evening school. In its first few years, the Brotherhood initially resembled an ordinary Islamic welfare society, focusing on Islamic education, with an emphasis on teaching students how to implement into their daily lives an ethos of solidarity and charity, rather than on philosophical issues.

The Muslim Brotherhood grew quickly. In 1931 there were three branches, and by 1938 there were three hundred throughout Egypt: It had thus developed into a major political opposition group with a highly diverse membership and widespread mass appeal.³⁷ al-Banna's vision of renewing broken links between tradition and modernity enabled the Brotherhood to gain a degree of popularity and influence enjoyed by no other welfare society. Furthermore, al-Banna felt that the ideas of Islamic religious reformers and religious education were no longer accessible to the general public, especially young people. He was determined to rectify this by training a group of young, motivated preachers equipped with modern teaching methods who would be independent both of the government and of the religious establishment.³⁸ In this environment we can observe the

³⁶ Lia, p. 36.

³⁷ Mitchell, pp. 12-13.

³⁸ Lia, pp. 53-57.

Muslim Brotherhood acting in vocal opposition to the Egyptian government. It advocated widespread social and political reform but restricted itself to its social welfare programs and its preaching. As long as the government allowed the Brotherhood to operate and did not restrict its access to a forum from which it could express its views to the public, it remained peaceful and generally followed the law.

The Brotherhood's first major project was the construction of a mosque, which was completed in 1931. They began to receive favorable attention in the press, and a Cairo branch was founded. In 1932, al-Banna was transferred to Cairo at his request, and the organization's headquarters moved there.³⁹ In the early 1930s, the Brotherhood's welfare activities included small-scale social work among the poor, building and repairing mosques, and establishing a number of Qur'anic schools. Members also set up small workshops and factories, and organized the collection and distribution of the alms tax. As the organization expanded it opened pharmacies, hospitals and clinics for the general public, and launched an adult literacy program, offering courses in coffee shops and clubs.⁴⁰

In 1931-32, the Brotherhood underwent an internal crisis in the course of which several members challenged al-Banna's leadership decisions, particularly his control over the organization's funds, his general stubbornness, and his insistence on having a carpenter as his deputy. This conflict reflected a more basic disagreement with al-Banna's concept of the Brotherhood's mission. Some members felt that the Brotherhood

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 40-42.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 109-111.

should simply be a traditional Islamic welfare society which wealthy local notables could support, meaning in particular that it should have open and transparent accounts and socially respectable leaders. al-Banna threatened to expel his enemies from the Brotherhood, at which point they resigned.⁴¹

In an effort to resolve the situation, al-Banna sought to clearly define the structure of the leadership in the organization. In the mid-1930s the Brotherhood developed a formal hierarchical structure, with the General Guide (al-Banna) at the top, assisted by a General Guidance Bureau and a deputy. Local branches were organized into districts, whose administration was largely autonomous. Categories of membership were introduced as well. Membership fees depended on the means of each member, with poor members paying no fees. Promotion through the hierarchy depended on the performance of Islamic duties and on knowledge attained in the Brotherhood's study groups. This merit-based system was a radical departure from the traditional practice of basing hierarchies on social status.⁴²

In 1933, the Brotherhood founded a publishing company and purchased a printing press, which it used to print several newspapers over the next decade. Funds were raised by creating a joint stock company in which only members of the Brotherhood were permitted to buy shares, thus protecting the organization's independence from the government and from the wealthy elite by guaranteeing that its members were the sole owners of its institutions, and that they alone financed new projects.⁴³

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 60-67.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 98-104.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 97-98.

al-Banna began to emphasize the Brotherhood's political responsibilities concerning a variety of issues such as prostitution, alcohol, gambling, inadequate religious education in schools, and the struggle against imperialism. This political involvement attracted large numbers of young, educated Egyptians, particularly students, to the Brotherhood by encouraging and supporting them in campaigning for political causes.⁴⁴

The Brotherhood became the standard bearer of the ideology of the disenfranchised classes, the voice of the educated middle and lower middle classes, and the conduit through which many members of those groups demanded political participation. Throughout the 1930s the Brotherhood placed increasing emphasis on social justice, and closing the gap between the classes became one of its main objectives. al-Banna voiced increasingly strong criticisms of the upper class and the class system as a whole

Islam is equal for all people and prefers nobody to others on the grounds of differences in blood or race, forefathers or descent, poverty or wealth. According to Islam everyone is equal... However, in deeds and natural gifts, then the answer is yes. The learned is above the ignorant... Thus, we see that Islam does not approve of the class system.⁴⁵

The Brotherhood called for the nationalization of key industries, and for government intervention in the economy. It encouraged laws to protect workers against exploitation, supported social welfare programs, including unemployment benefits, public housing and health and adult literacy programs, which would be funded by higher taxes on the wealthy. By 1948 the Brotherhood was advocating land reform to enable

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 57-58, 67-69, 183-184.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 73-74.

small farmers to own land.⁴⁶ al-Banna was attempting to bring about social renewal through a modern reinterpretation of Islam, arguing that religion should not be confined to the domain of private life, but should rather be applied to the problems of the modern world. Essentially, he believed that Islam should be used as the moral foundation of a national renaissance with a total reform of political, economic and social systems.⁴⁷

The Brotherhood's openness to different forms of Islamic belief and practice represented another aspect of its appeal to young people. al-Banna condemned the rigid preoccupation of some *Salafiyya* societies with minor points of religious doctrine, and advocated tolerance and goodwill between the different forms and sects of Islam. Recent scholarly work even suggests that Hasan al-Bana and the Muslim Brotherhood accepted the validity of Shi'ism in Iran.⁴⁸ He felt that Sufism and other traditional practices should be welcomed, and that the Brotherhood should focus on basic social and political issues rather than on theological hair-splitting.⁴⁹

Militancy and World War II

In the late 1930s, some members pushed for the Muslim Brotherhood to form a military wing to conduct armed struggle against British rule. Others were already disobeying the Brotherhood's leadership and had engaged in isolated clashes with the police. al-Banna felt that the Brotherhood was not ready to engage in military activities,

⁴⁶ Lia., pp. 73-74, 81-82, 206-211 and Carré, pp. 45-47.

⁴⁷ Lia., pp. 74-77.

⁴⁸ Abbas Khamma Yar *Iran wa al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun--Dirasat fi 'Awamil al-Itifaq wa al-Ifitiraq* (Beirut: Markaz al-Dirasaat al-Istratijiyyah wa al-Buhuth wa al-Tawthiq, 1998)

⁴⁹ Lia, pp. 59-60, 114-117.

and feared that those who wished to do so "might take the wrong course and miss the target." He advocated a more cautious, long-term plan of forming groups of particularly dedicated members, called "battalions" who would receive rigorous spiritual and physical training: Once their numbers were sufficient, al-Banna felt, the Battalions might be prepared to engage in warfare. However, the battalion system failed to develop satisfactorily, and pressure from members for armed struggle against the British increased. In 1939, conflict over this issue developed into a major crisis, during which some of the more extreme members left the Brotherhood to form a rival organization called the Youth of Muhammad. The following year the Brotherhood created a military wing called the secret apparatus.⁵⁰ Later, in 1941 the elected General Assembly was replaced by a smaller appointed body called the Consultative Assembly. However, the Society's structure remained decentralized, so that branches could continue to operate if the government arrested leading members.⁵¹

During the Second World War the Brotherhood adopted the position that Egypt should remain neutral. In 1941 Britain replaced the Egyptian government with a puppet regime, martial law was imposed, and some public figures that Britain considered subversive were arrested. al-Banna was imprisoned twice but was quickly released. The Brotherhood's publications were suppressed, its meetings were banned and any reference to the organization in the newspapers was forbidden.⁵² In the course of the war, the Brotherhood alternated between avoiding sensitive issues that could give the government

⁵⁰ Lia, pp. 172-178 and Carré, pp. 30-31.

⁵¹ Lia, pp. 186-192.

⁵² Mitchell, pp. 19-23.

an excuse to crack down on the organization, and taking risky political positions such as calling for the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company. While it generally kept a low profile, the Brotherhood concentrated on maintaining and expanding its membership base and extending its social welfare programs, which included helping the victims of Axis bombings of Egyptian cities.

War-related shortages contributed to political unrest in Egypt. In February 1942, a mass demonstration of students led to the resignation of the government. British troops surrounded the royal palace and forced the king to accept a government headed by the Wafd party, which had remained loyal and obedient to the British throughout the war.⁵³ The first act of the Wafd government was to dissolve parliament and call for new elections. When al-Banna declared his candidacy, the Wafd prime minister asked him to withdraw it; he agreed, but in return he obtained the prime minister's promise that the Brotherhood could resume its normal activities without governmental interference. Also, the government would enact measures to curtail prostitution and the sale of alcohol. The government did make prostitution illegal, and restricted the sale of alcohol on religious holidays. The Brotherhood was allowed to resume some of its work, but over the next few years the government's attitude alternated between repression and friendliness towards the organization.⁵⁴ As a result of sporadic repression, the call for violent action and increased militancy within the organization grew. Essentially, a movement for the

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Mitchell, pp. 26-28.

radicalization of the organization emerged within the Brotherhood in response to the government's attempts to limit its exposure to the public.

The Brotherhood then reorganized itself into a system of cells in order to minimize the impact of arrests on the membership. In 1943, the Society replaced its failed battalion system with a cellular form of internal organization called "families" which consisted of groups of five members. The families met regularly, usually in their own homes, and assumed responsibility for one another's welfare.⁵⁵ Similar organizational structures have proven to be extremely successful when employed by guerrilla and insurgency groups around the world throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Postwar

During the postwar years the Brotherhood grew rapidly, and by 1948 had two thousand branches with over a million members.⁵⁶ In September 1945 it adopted a new constitution that formally recognized the structures and organization put in place during the 1938 reorganization mentioned above. It also submitted its records to the Ministry of Social Affairs as was required by law, and was classified as a "political, social and religious institution" but did not receive legal recognition as a political party. Basically, this meant that government assistance given to charities would be available for some of the Brotherhood's activities but that its legal status was dependent upon the whims of the government. Therefore the social welfare programs were divided into separate sections,

⁵⁵ Lia, pp. 256-266, 176-177.

⁵⁶ Carré, p. 21.

each with its own director and structure, in order to protect them from governmental interference.⁵⁷

al-Banna and several other Brotherhood candidates were defeated in the rigged elections of 1945. The Brotherhood's publications expressed hostility and criticism towards the government and its policies, and it organized strikes and nationalist demonstrations. In October 1945, the Society organized a "people's congress" on national liberation in Cairo and seven other cities. Its exclusion from parliamentary politics strengthened the position of those members who advocated a more radical and violent confrontation with the government. By this time many were becoming increasingly dismissive of al-Banna's policy of nonviolent action.⁵⁸

The Muslim Brotherhood had arrived at a point where there was considerable risk of its stated goals of gradual societal change evolving into a call for violent revolution. al-Banna's concept of nationalism was Islamic in origin, and its long-term goal was to see all humanity united by the Muslim faith. On the other hand the Brotherhood had no clear definition of the sort of political system it wished for. The primary consequence of the Brotherhood's affirmation of Islamic nationalism was its support of the anticolonial movement in Egypt and other Islamic countries before World War II and anticommunism after the war.

The Brotherhood was also vehemently against the existing social order and the government that supported it, which was one of the main reasons for its popularity,

⁵⁷Mitchell, pp. 36-37.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 33.

especially among young people.⁵⁹ However, government attempts to suppress and marginalize the Muslim Brotherhood seemingly backfired and, in effect, nearly created a violent revolutionary movement.

After the fall of the Wafd party from power in 1945, the Brotherhood and the Wafd became the two main opposition parties in the political arena. Out of power, the Wafd was more eager to champion the nationalist cause, with the result that the Brotherhood found itself in direct competition with the Wafd for the leadership of the Egyptian nationalist movement. However, the communists chose to support the Wafd. Despite their deep mutual distrust, the two groups occasionally joined in the same mass demonstrations against the government. However, the Brotherhood's refusal to cooperate with the communists led to the breakdown of relations between the two groups. The Wafd party accused the Brothers of being tools of the government and of the ruling class while it alone represented the masses. The Brothers took offense at these accusations, and organized competing strikes of their own. This further damaged their already poor relationship with the government, and the Brotherhood again became the target of police harassment and summary arrests.⁶⁰

In 1946, al-Banna was nearly killed by a bomb attack, suspected of being carried out by Wafd supporters. Tensions continued to escalate and followers of the Wafd party and members of the Brotherhood had a series of violent encounters. After these clashes, representatives of the Brotherhood and the Wafd party held secret meetings in order to

⁵⁹ Lia, pp. 79-81.

⁶⁰ Mitchell, pp. 42-49.

alleviate the tension between the two groups.⁶¹ The ability of these rival organizations to disrupt the peace and mobilize the population did not go unnoticed by the government. The government's reaction would be more repression and tighter control of the political currents in Egypt.

In October 1946, the Egyptian Prime Minister, Sidqi Pasha, and the British reached agreement on a draft treaty according to which the British agreed to evacuate Cairo, Alexandria, and the Nile Delta by March 31, 1947 and the rest of Egypt by September 1, 1949. The government agreed that in case of aggression by any of Egypt's neighbors, the British would be allowed back to their former bases in Suez and the Egyptians would cooperate with them as they had done during World War II. These pro-British terms were unacceptable to many Egyptian nationalists, and their announcement was followed by violent student riots. Members of the Brotherhood's secret apparatus started to carry out attacks on British interests as well as on targets related to the Egyptian government. The government responded to the outbreak of violence with harsh and repressive measures, including arresting many members of the Brotherhood and other nationalist groups. Rioting continued throughout 1946, and in December the government resigned.⁶² However, the postwar global political environment quickly became a major focus of regional policy.

In Egypt and across the Arab world, the plight of the Palestinian people continued to outrage people. The 1947 UN resolution on the partitioning of Palestine gave the issue

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 49-50, 60.

a sense of urgency, and the Brotherhood sent volunteers to fight in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. During the war, there were numerous bomb attacks on Jews in Cairo, many of which were attributed to members of the Brotherhood's Secret Apparatus.⁶³ In March 1948, members of the secret apparatus assassinated a judge who had given a prison sentence to a Muslim Brother for attacking British soldiers. al-Banna expressed his revulsion at the assassination,⁶⁴ but the violence of the secret apparatus demonstrated that Hasan al-Bana and the core of the Muslim Brotherhood was losing control of its members. The decentralized structure of the organization allowed for independent operations to be carried out by individual cells. However, without direct logistical control, the leadership could only influence its members and hope for the best. As tensions and repression on the part of the government escalated, so did the violence.

In December 1948, the Egyptian government released a decree outlawing the Muslim Brotherhood. The police had discovered stockpiles of bombs and other weapons accumulated by the secret apparatus, and the government feared, or purported to fear, that the Brotherhood was planning a revolution. Also, since the Brotherhood had its own infrastructure in the form of hospitals, factories and schools, as well as an armed military force, the government saw it potentially developing into a parallel state, which some Egyptians might come to see as more legitimate than the official one.⁶⁵ A few weeks later, with the organization's hierarchy and communications thoroughly disrupted because of the arrests, a member of the Brotherhood assassinated Prime Minister

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 55-58.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 62.

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 58-66.

Nuqrashi. Several trials followed, and Nuqrashi's assassin was executed. The prosecution attempted to demonstrate that al-Banna had been responsible for the assassination, while the defense argued that he had been unable to maintain control over "extremists" in the secret apparatus. In the end he was exonerated.⁶⁶

The new prime minister, 'Abd al-Hadi, attempted to suppress all dissent by subjecting the population to brutal repressive measures, including the systematic use of torture against political prisoners.⁶⁷ al-Banna again rejected all the accusations leveled at the Brotherhood. Once more he condemned the use of violence by Brotherhood members, including attacks on Jews, declaring that the leaders of the organization would never have sanctioned this violence, and were unable to prevent it because the arrest of the leaders had made it impossible for them to exercise their authority. He also denied that the Brotherhood had been planning to overthrow the government, insisting that the stockpiles of weapons had been intended for use in Palestine in open partnership with the Arab League.

In February 1949, probably on the orders of the prime minister, the political police assassinated al-Banna.⁶⁸ However, the gradual escalation of repression and reprisals by the government did not put an end to the Brotherhood as it had originally intended. Instead, it encouraged members to radicalize and join the more extreme elements of the organization that advocated violent opposition to the government. As control of the Muslim Brotherhood began to slip away from the leadership, due in large

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 72-74.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

⁶⁸ Carré, p. 33, and Mitchell, pp. 70-71.

part to the imprisonment of the leaders, the violence increased. Rather than handicapping the organization, this allowed the more radical elements of the Brotherhood to act with greater impunity.

In May 1949, following a series of arrests of Brotherhood members, a group of Brothers made an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate prime minister 'Abd al-Hadi, which sparked yet more arrests. By July, more than four thousand members of the Brotherhood were in prison. While in prison they continued to maintain their organization and hierarchy.⁶⁹

When the Wafd returned to power in 1950 the Brotherhood attempted to have the government give recognition to the Muslim Brotherhood again, but this was unsuccessful. Martial law was ended, and all its provisions were suspended except with regard to the Brotherhood. The Parliament passed a "Societies Law" that was clearly aimed at the Brotherhood, requiring a description and photograph of every member to be registered with the government. The Ministry of the Interior announced that it intended to buy the Muslim Brotherhood's headquarters in Cairo and use the building as a police station. The Brotherhood responded by filing a lawsuit against the government and actually won, thus reacquiring its legal status and its property.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Mitchell, p. 80.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 82-84.

The 1952 Egyptian Revolution

In 1951, an outsider, Hasan Isma'il al-Hudaybi, an experienced judge known for his strong aversion to violence, was chosen as al-Banna's successor. It was believed that he could reestablish the Muslim Brotherhood's respectability and legitimacy which had been tarnished as a result of the political violence of the late 1940s. He struggled against being treated as a mere figurehead and actively spoke out against the secret apparatus and its violent tactics. He attempted to dissolve it, but only managed to alienate its members, who considered themselves fighters in a noble cause.⁷¹

On 8 October 1951 the Egyptian prime minister withdrew Egypt from the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, which immediately triggered mass nationalist demonstrations in favor of Egyptian independence. Over the next few months, antigovernment riots broke out all over the country, expressing the nationalist movement's frustration with the government's failure to follow up its actions with more vigorous efforts to achieve actual independence. On 25 January 1952, British forces attacked an Egyptian police station in the Canal Zone and a battle occurred. The next day, students in Cairo, police and military officers marched together to the parliament to demand a declaration of war against Britain.

al-Hudaybi maintained his opposition to violent action and deepened the conflict between himself and his opponents within the organization and the secret apparatus. Several new governments followed and fell in rapid succession. Then, on July 23, 1952 the Free Officers, led by Muhammad Naguib, seized power, overthrowing the monarchy.

⁷¹ Mitchell, pp. 82-88.

This largely bloodless coup was greeted with enormous enthusiasm throughout Egypt.⁷² The Brotherhood did not participate in the coup, or its aftermath, as an organization but had agreed to assist the revolution, mostly by maintaining order, protecting foreigners and minorities and encouraging popular support for the coup.⁷³

After the revolution, relations between the Brotherhood and the new government rapidly deteriorated. Many members of the Free Officers, including Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser and Anwar al-Sadat, had had close ties with the Muslim Brotherhood since the 1940s. However, there was a deep animosity and distrust between Nasser and al-Hudaybi. Furthermore, the new government was unwilling to share power and did not want to have a constitution based on Islam.

In 1953, the government banned all political parties and organizations except the Muslim Brotherhood. It then created a new party, the Liberation Rally, and suggested that the Brotherhood should merge with the Liberation Rally. The government was attempting to marginalize the Brotherhood without sharing any real political power with it.⁷⁴ Despite strong criticisms from within the Brotherhood, al-Hudaybi retained control and had the secret apparatus formally dissolved and its leaders expelled from the organization.⁷⁵ This demonstrates the extent of the commitment of the Brotherhood leadership to nonviolence and its willingness to cooperate with the secular government provided that it was allowed to maintain a public space in which to operate legally.

⁷² Mitchell, pp. 88-96.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 96-104.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 106-111.

⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 116-125.

In January 1954, the government sent members of the Liberation Rally to disrupt a Muslim Brotherhood student rally, and the confrontation turned violent. The government then decreed that the Muslim Brotherhood should be dissolved because al-Hudaybi and his supporters were planning to overthrow it, and al-Hudaybi was arrested along with hundreds of others. This use of severe and repressive measures to maintain power, which was perceived as Nasser's policy, caused the government's popularity to plummet. There were anti-Nasser demonstrations, which led to a power struggle between him and General Naguib. al-Hudaybi sided with Nasser and with the revolution, gaining the release of most of the imprisoned Brothers and, once more, the restoration of the Brotherhood's legal status. However, the government repression of January had disturbed many members who felt that the secret apparatus should not have been abolished so quickly, and it was rebuilt under a new leadership without al-Hudaybi's knowledge.⁷⁶ This situation demonstrates that members of the Muslim Brotherhood were willing to use violent tactics when the government denied them access to a public forum. Repressive measures, including the jailing of the leadership, did not silence the organization, but only radicalized it. It also unintentionally removed the strongest voices for nonviolence in the organization.

If the government had permitted the Brotherhood to remain as a political opposition group, it would have legitimized the whole political process which it had initially put in motion. Instead, it attempted, first, to co-opt the organization and when that failed, to dismantle it. The result was the temporary loss of public support for the

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 126-134.

government and the revitalization and encouragement of the wing of the Brotherhood which advocated greater radicalization.

In a letter to the government, al-Hudaybi called for the lifting of martial law, a return to parliamentary democracy and an end to censorship of the media. Relations between the government and the Brotherhood fell apart again after the latter criticized the terms of the negotiations between the British and the Egyptian government over the Suez Canal. After an agreement on the terms of a new treaty was announced, al-Hudaybi immediately criticized it as too generous towards the British and as a threat to Egyptian sovereignty. Accordingly, the government began using the police to provoke violent confrontation with the Brotherhood at peaceful gatherings in mosques and other places. A clinic run by the Brotherhood was raided and destroyed, and the government blamed the Brotherhood for the violence. al-Hudaybi went into hiding, and the state-run press launched a propaganda campaign to discredit him. The government also declared that several Brothers who were traveling abroad were guilty of treason, and stripped them of their Egyptian citizenship.⁷⁷

The Anglo-Egyptian Treaty was signed on 19 October 1954. Members of the new Secret Apparatus saw the treaty as a betrayal of Egypt and decided to act independently. On 26 October, a member of the secret apparatus allegedly fired shots at Nasser while he was making a speech. There is some evidence that Nasser and his close associates may have staged the assassination attempt themselves. Regardless of the truth of this allegation, the attempt on his life gave a huge boost to Nasser's popularity and enabled

⁷⁷ Mitchell, pp. 134-144.

him to prevail in his power struggle with General Naguib. It also gave him the perfect opportunity to eliminate the Brotherhood. The organization was officially dissolved, its headquarters burned, and thousands of its members were arrested. Large show-trials with little regard for due process of law were held. Six Brotherhood members were executed, and seven, including al-Hudaybi, were sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor.⁷⁸

The Nasser Years

Throughout Nasser's presidency many members of the Muslim Brotherhood were held in prisons that were barely more than concentration camps. While imprisoned they were routinely tortured. Some died in custody, including twenty-one Brothers killed in their cells in June 1957. Those who escaped arrest went into hiding. Sayyid Qutb, the former editor of the Society's newspaper, became the leader of the Brothers held in prison and became the organization's General Guide in 1959. Qutb was the quintessential Islamic fundamentalist who encouraged the radicalization of the movement. Essentially, the consequence of the large-scale repressions by the Nasser's government was to push the Muslim Brotherhood towards a more radical form of fundamentalism that advocated armed struggle rather than social reform.⁷⁹

Those Brothers who had gone underground began to reorganize. In 1956, those who had been imprisoned but not judged were released.⁸⁰ Outside the prisons, Zaynab al-Ghazali, head of the Association of Muslim Women, played a key role in rebuilding the

⁷⁸ Mitchell, pp. 144-160 and Carré, pp. 59-63.

⁷⁹ Cook, pp. 102-06.

⁸⁰ Carré, pp. 65-76, 83-86.

organization. She had been a member of the Brotherhood since the late 1940s and maintained contact with the imprisoned leadership.⁸¹ Her focus was on Islamic education, but other autonomous groups of Brothers also began to organize. They found their analytical framework and political agenda in Qutb's writings, which were circulated by al-Ghazali. Qutb's writings included *Social Justice in Islam*, which set out the principles of an Islamic socialism and his assessment of the Nasser regime, and how it could be overcome.⁸² In 1964, Qutb was released for several months, and his book *Milestones* was published. In it he argued the theme of the failure of both capitalism and socialism.⁸³ Qutb saw Islam as the solution to humanity's predicament: The entire world, including Egypt, was living in a state of *jahiliyya*,⁸⁴ roughly translated as a way of life characterized by ignorant hostility towards God's will. In particular, human beings erred in allowing themselves to establish their own value systems, instead of accepting God's sovereignty (*hakimiyya*).⁸⁵ According to Qutb, a true Muslim society must reject all laws and traditions made by humans. Therefore, modern Islamic societies were in reality unbelievers (*kafir*), a view which clearly deviated from the ideology of Hasan al-Banna and the original core principles of the Muslim Brotherhood.⁸⁶

A core of believers was needed to begin recreating the *ummah*. This vanguard would then grow until it encompassed the entire world. Confronted by a totalitarian state,

⁸¹ Voll, p. 373.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Cook, p. 103.

⁸⁴ The conventional usage of the word describes the 'time of ignorance' before the coming of Islam.

⁸⁵ Carré, pp. 94-95.

⁸⁶ Ramadan, p. 156.

Qutb urged them to prepare a *jihad*, whose military objectives were aimed at the overthrow of those who had usurped the sovereignty that should be God's alone.⁸⁷

Milestones sparked a debate within the Brotherhood between young activists who favored radical, violent action in the form of an immediate coup, while more experienced members such as Zaynab al-Ghazali, believed that the organization should follow the example set by Hasan al-Bana and limit itself to educational work until it had three quarters of the population on its side.⁸⁸ This policy, which has been a characteristic of the official policy of the Brotherhood ever since, has earned it the scorn of more extreme revolutionary Islamic fundamentalist militant groups.

In August 1965, the government claimed to have discovered that the Brotherhood was organizing a huge revolutionary plot. Roughly 18,000 people were arrested, including Qutb and al-Ghazali. One hundred to two hundred were imprisoned, and thirty-eight were killed in custody during the investigation. The police used torture and coercion during the interrogations. Raids throughout Egypt were accompanied by an intense propaganda campaign against the Brotherhood. Based on confessions obtained under torture, Qutb and two other Brothers were executed in August 1966.⁸⁹ In the 1970s, it emerged that the plot had been fabricated by the security services as part of a conflict between different factions within the regime.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Carré, p. 76.

⁸⁸ Voll, p. 373.

⁸⁹ "The trial [of Qutb and others in 1966] offered the accused all the guarantees of fairness characteristic of a military court in a dictatorial state trying defendants broken by torture." Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1993, p. 34.

⁹⁰ Carré, pp. 76-82, 96-97.

The result of the government repression of the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamic fundamentalist organizations was that it acted as a catalyst for the radicalization of the rhetoric emerging from the fundamentalist movement. Sayyid Qutb's advocacy of violent opposition to the government gained many supporters in the fundamentalist cause, both inside and outside prison. Following the release of most of the religious and political prisoners by 1971, the fundamentalist community had effectively been divided into two broad groups. The first followed the old established leadership of the Brotherhood that supported gradual social change over revolutionary confrontation. This group was headed by al-Hudaybi, who, while in prison, wrote *Missionaries Not Judges*, in refutation of the notion of *takfir* and the radical views expressed in Qutb's *Milestones* and other insurrectionist writings.⁹¹

The second group consisted of radicalized militant fundamentalists who advocated violent revolution in order to change Egypt into a 'true' Islamic state. An ironic consequence of the campaign of widespread arrests and detention of political and religious dissidents was that this actually provided the radical militants a fertile recruiting ground with a "captive" audience. Nonradicalized students who were members of student groups or Islamic organizations were thrown into the prisons with the hard-core leadership of the radicalized movements. The prisoners were allowed to socialize and mingle. The result was that prisons became education centers where the writings of Qutb and Mawdudi, an Indo-Pakistani Islamic fundamentalist writer, would be studied and discussed. It was not hard to convince the young and impressionable prisoners that a

⁹¹ Voll, p. 273.

society that had established prison camps for pious Muslims and tortured and executed dissidents was a society in *jahiliyya*.⁹² What emerged from the prison camps was a new generation of radicalized Islamic fundamentalists who rejected cooperation with the government and were receptive to violent revolutionary tactics. Through their repressive tactics the Egyptian government had created a stronger and better-defined opposition movement, which posed a far larger threat to the safety and security of the regime than the Muslim Brotherhood had ever done.

The Sadat Years

In 1967 the Arab world was delivered a devastating defeat by Israel in the Six Day War. One of the consequences of this defeat was the gradual decline of support for the Pan-Arab and Arab-Socialist ideologies developed and supported by Nasser. In fact, many people throughout the Arab world viewed the defeat as punishment from God for straying too far from the true path of Islam. The population of the Arab world, including Egypt, began to reexamine its religious roots and to question the pervasive secularism that had been in vogue during the preceding decades. When Nasser died in 1970, his successor, Anwar Sadat, was faced with a reemergence of Islamic awareness in popular culture and civil society which was sympathetic to the expressed goals of the Muslim Brotherhood and other moderate fundamentalist organizations.⁹³ In addition, the

⁹² Ibid., p. 374.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 376.

popularity of these organizations was further increased since they were providing many of the social services to the poor that the government failed to provide.

In 1971 Anwar Sadat introduced a policy of economic and political liberalization. The concentration camps were closed, and the government began to release members of the Brotherhood from prison, although the organization remained illegal. In fact, the government tolerated the Brotherhood unofficially. It was allowed to resume printing various publications as well as establish new schools and mosques.⁹⁴ The Brotherhood was allowed to publish its monthly newspaper, *al-Da'wa*, and the identity of many members was public knowledge.⁹⁵ With the moderate leadership firmly back in control, this lessening of the tensions between the government and the Muslim Brotherhood had some positive effects. The Brotherhood retreated from the *jihadist* rhetoric that had advocated violent insurrection and instead demanded the application of *shari'a* law. In response the government initiated a lengthy review of all Egyptian law to determine how best to combine it with *shari'a*. In 1980, the constitution was amended to state that the *shari'a* was "a principal source of legislation,"⁹⁶ although not, as the radical fundamentalists wanted it, "the source of all legislation."

Another goal of the Brotherhood was to persuade the government to allow it to operate legally again as a political party, but this was not allowed. The Political Parties Law of 1977 specifically prohibited parties based on religious affiliation, though as a

⁹⁴ Voll, p. 380.

⁹⁵ Carrie Wickham. *Mobilizing Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 65, 96 and Ramadan, pp. 165-66.

⁹⁶ Carré, pp. 107-112 and Voll, p. 377.

concession Sadat appointed members of the Brotherhood to high positions in the ruling Center Party.⁹⁷

Sadat's primary goal in embracing the religious revival and tolerating the fundamentalists was to undermine the leftists and the remaining Nasserists in Egypt. Furthermore, the Brotherhood provided a moderate alternative to the radical *takfir* organizations. Hence the Brotherhood, with its intense hatred of communism, became the natural ally of the regime. Furthermore, by overtly aligning himself with the Brotherhood, Sadat was able to gain popular support to liberalize and privatize the Egyptian economy.⁹⁸ In exchange, he had to concede to allow the popular fundamentalist organization access to civil society and allow it to play an active role in the ruling party.

Sadat's economic policies were drastic and caused severe price increases for basic necessities while government-sponsored public services degraded, which led to huge riots in January 1977. Student religious and political groups began to exercise a great deal of influence outside universities as well. *al-Da'wa* supported the student Islamic movement, and leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood were invited to speak at large, festive gatherings organized by student groups on Islamic holidays. When the government began to obstruct the student movement, and then to attack its members with riot police, the Brotherhood's relations with the government deteriorated as well.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ramadan, pp. 166-67.

⁹⁸ Voll, p. 377.

⁹⁹ Wickham, pp. 32-34, 115-117.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s the Brotherhood attempted to use its influence within the Islamic student movements to consolidate the groups under its leadership.¹⁰⁰ Independent of the student groups, Islamic groups outside the universities organized the Permanent Islamic Congress for the Propagation of Islam, and proceeded to elect al-Talmasani, the leader of the Brotherhood since 1973, as leader of the organization.¹⁰¹ The Egyptian government viewed this as a threat, considering it indicative of the Brotherhood's intention to regain the political power that it had lost in 1954. Furthermore, the government preferred that the Islamic fundamentalist movement should remain fractured. They wished to deal with various organizations individually so that they could control them better and ensure that the Islamic groups were working towards the state's goals. Consolidation of the fundamentalists meant that rival organizations could no longer be played off against each other. Essentially, a consolidated fundamentalist movement would become a powerful social force that would be working to advance their own cause instead of being a tool of the government.

Furthermore, Sadat had angered the fundamentalist organizations, especially the radicalized militants, by moving towards reconciliation with Israel. Most Egyptians had perceived the 1973 war as a victory and many had long regarded Israel as an illegitimate entity comprised of infidels that were repressing good Palestinian Muslims by occupying their land. According to many Islamic fundamentalists, including the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic Congress, there could be no reconciliation with Israel. The

¹⁰⁰ Ramadan, p. 170.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

Camp David accords of 1978 were met by widespread condemnation throughout Egypt and were criticized by the Brotherhood in *al-Da'wa*.¹⁰² This political *faux pas* combined with the decline in Egypt's economic situation and the explosive growth of radical fundamentalist organizations following Nasser's ill-conceived crackdown on religious organizations proved to be a legacy that would continue to destabilize Sadat's regime.¹⁰³

The radical fundamentalist groups, forged in Nasser's prisons and educated on Qutb's writings, began to exercise more influence over Egyptian society. Their stated goal was to end *jahiliyya* and establish a truly Islamic society by destabilizing and overthrowing an "unbelieving government."¹⁰⁴ While these radicalized militant groups were always fringe groups with relatively small numbers of followers, they played an important role in affecting Sadat's policies towards the fundamentalist organizations.

New radicalized fundamentalist groups called for violence against the regime with the stated goal of overthrowing the atheist leadership and replacing it with an Islamic state. The first of these groups was the Military Technical College Organization headed by the Palestinian, Salih Adb Allah Siriyya. They believed that the biggest mistake of the Islamist movements of the past was the gradualist approach. Siriyya believed that they must seize control of the state and establish an Islamic society from the top down.

A second group was the Society of Muslims. They believed in a course of emigration out of Egypt. They viewed Egypt as a land of atheism led by infidels. However, the emigration was only necessary in order to gather their forces for an

¹⁰² Ramadan, p. 168.

¹⁰³ Voll, p. 377.

¹⁰⁴ Voll, p. 381.

offensive retaking of Egypt. Furthermore, the society of Muslims was willing to go a step further than other takfir groups and was willing to label everyone within the atheist society who does not actively fight against the regime as infidels and atheists as well. The society also engaged in kidnappings and assassinations of Egyptian officials.

Perhaps the biggest takfir group to emerge during the Sadat regime was al-Jihad. al-Jihad emerged as a splinter group from Siriyya's organization. Led by Ahmed Salih Amer, this group was mostly comprised of radicalized university students. Their primary goal was to overthrow the state. The Egyptian government in 1977 essentially destroyed the group but it would continue to reform over the ensuing years.

A final important takfir organization, headed by Muhammed Faraj would be responsible for the assassination of Anwar Sadat in 1981, following the mass round-up and detention of political adversaries of the regime. According to Faraj, jihad had become a "neglected duty" among contemporary Muslims. This book was first published and distributed to students in Cairo in the early 1980s where it influenced an entire generation of youth. *The Neglected Duty* echoes Qutb on the need for a strategy that attacks the "near enemy"—apostate Muslim regimes—before the "far enemy"—meaning Israel, the United States, and other Western powers interfering in the Muslim world. Faraj also accused the Muslim Brothers and the establishment Egyptian clergy of collaborating with the secular Egyptian regime.

Faraj argued that both the Qur'an and the Hadith were fundamentally about warfare or war in the service of God and in opposition to evil. The notion of jihad, or struggle, is something Muslims should accept literally. It is not simply about struggle for

personal piety but rather struggle for Islam against God's enemies. Muslims are called to be soldiers for Islam, and true soldiers of Islam are willing to use any means available in order to achieve their righteous goals. The reward would be paradise itself. In heaven for the martyrs and on earth for the living once a true Islamic state was established over the entire human population.

Faraj and his followers believed that by killing Sadat, or Pharoh, it would spark a widespread uprising against the regime. The group was destroyed when the uprising it anticipated failed to materialize. It was the last serious takfir group to exist solely in Egypt. However, al Jama al Islamiyya would succeed al Jihad. Founded by the remnants of al Jihad, including Umar Abd al- Rahman, Jama embraced takfir as part of a wider strategy that extended beyond just Egypt. While they would label a society Jahilliyya, they would acknowledge that individuals could be Muslim despite the poor state of society. Jama rejected the democratic experiment as un-Islamic and they wished to model society after the caliphate. By the late 1980s Jama would engage in violent skirmishes with the Egyptian authorities. Though they declared a cease fire and officially renounced violence in 1999, their former leader, Abd al Rahman is currently serving a life sentence for his role as mastermind of the first World Trade Center bombing.

These radical organizations were the legacy of the repressive measures enacted by the government. While the Muslim Brotherhood, having been allowed a public role and forum in which to operate, rejected violence. Under the new leadership of 'Umar al-Talmasani the Brotherhood clearly defined its position vis-à-vis the Egyptian government. The Brotherhood did not wish to rule nor was it concerned with those who

ruled: rather, it was concerned with the form of rule or the constitution and the laws that governed society. Violence only undermined the fabric of society and strengthened the enemies of Egypt.¹⁰⁵

In response to the violence of the *takfir* groups and the increasing influence of moderate fundamentalist organizations with civil society, Sadat's regime attempted to exert more control over religious institutions. As fundamentalist organizations became more vocal in their opposition to Sadat's modernist policies, he attempted to establish a non-fundamentalist alternative.

In effect, Sadat wanted to create a "civil religion" headed by a "Believing President,"¹⁰⁶ but his efforts met with little real success. Although he promoted the image of a pious Islamic leader, his regime worked behind the scenes to suppress the fundamentalist opposition groups. At this point Sadat could probably have co-opted the whole of the fundamentalist movement and gained the support of a large portion of the population if he had openly allied himself with the moderate fundamentalists. Legal recognition of the Muslim Brotherhood and a couple of key cabinet positions could have established the Muslim Brotherhood as a loyal opposition. It might well have relieved the tension between the government and the people that was pervasive throughout Egyptian society and could have pulled support away from the radicalized militant organizations. Instead, Sadat chose to emulate Nasser and ordered the arrests of thousands of Islamic fundamentalists in 1981. He essentially lumped all the moderate

¹⁰⁵ Ramadan, p. 168.

¹⁰⁶ Voll, p. 378.

and peaceful organizations in Egypt, including the Islamic Congress, the Muslim Brotherhood and student groups, with the *takfir* groups. Instead of recognizing that the Brotherhood could use its leadership role to influence the fundamentalist community to use nonviolent tactics, he focused repressive measures on the Brotherhood, effectively removing the only major check on the radical militant groups.¹⁰⁷ The militant groups viewed this as a last straw and while this crack down was taking place, a member of *al-Jihad* assassinated Sadat in October of 1981.

The Brotherhood consistently rejected the revolutionary and terrorist violence of the militant Islamic groups such as *al-Jihad*. It continued to follow the leadership of al-Hubaydi and al-Ghazali that had called for the gradual reorientation and Islamization of society. At the same time, it argued that increasingly brutal police persecution was largely to blame for this escalation. It asserted that if the Brotherhood were to be legalized it would be able to help combat radical extremism by providing Islamic education to young people. Instead, while his popularity was plummeting, Sadat ordered arrests among all opposition groups, including the Brotherhood. The arrested members of the Brotherhood were released in January 1982, never having been charged with any crimes.¹⁰⁸

Sadat's inability to achieve a modern and moderate Islamic political culture that could be a state-sponsored alternative to more radical fundamentalism provoked a

¹⁰⁷ Ramadan, p. 172.

¹⁰⁸ Wickham, pp. 65-66.

backlash against his 'reforms'. As his reforms became increasingly unpopular, so did his vision of a modern and moderate Islam led by a "Believing President."

This situation meant that the Islamic fundamentalist alternative promoted by the opposition gained popularity at the government's expense. Furthermore, by opening the door to the opposition by allowing it to participate in public discourse when he was trying to gain its support for his economic policies, Sadat had legitimized the opposition's participation in civil society. He could not claim to be the leader of an Islamic nation if he attempted to suppress the message of the popular fundamentalist organizations. Furthermore, he could never gain the popular support of the people while he was perceived to be attacking civil society.

Hence when the fundamentalists began to turn against his regime, Sadat found his options limited. Rather than exploring a path of compromise that could have marginalized the radical militant opposition in favor of the moderates, he resorted to repression. This repression prevented the Muslim Brotherhood from being able to exert its influence over the more radical groups and ultimately motivated a radicalized militant group to assassinate him .

The Mubarak Years

Under the rule of Husni Mubarak, Egypt has been surprisingly stable. While Nasser had ruled with his force of personality and Sadat had led by flamboyant excesses,

Mubarak has maintained a quiet and steady leadership where most policies were implemented behind the scenes.¹⁰⁹

While Nasser and Sadat failed to distinguish any differences among the various religiously motivated opposition groups and tended to engage in a wholesale suppression of Islamists, Mubarak and his advisors were able to separate the handful of violent revolutionary organizations from the mainstream religious organizations that were promoting nonviolent methods of achieving an Islamic state.¹¹⁰

During the 1980s Mubarak's government continued the policy of identifying itself as one of the primary Islamic institutions in society. They also continued efforts to control the message of Islamists by suppressing the more radical groups and co-opting the message of the moderates.¹¹¹ In a marked change from the tactics employed by his predecessor, Mubarak narrowly focused the repressive activities of the state only on those individuals and organizations that were already violent or represented direct threats to the state such as *al-Jihad*, which had been responsible for the assassination of Sadat. He also released most of those arrested in 1981 during the widespread roundup of Islamists carried out under Sadat's orders. Furthermore, Mubarak opened a dialogue with the militant Islamic organizations in an attempt to persuade them to deradicalize and embrace nonviolent methods of opposition, even going so far as to release militants from prison in order to facilitate talks.¹¹² Essentially, Mubarak came to realize that Islamic

¹⁰⁹ Voll, p. 384.

¹¹⁰ Robert Bianchi, "Islam and Democracy in Egypt," *Current History* 88 (1989) p. 93.

¹¹¹ Voll, pp. 384-85.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

fundamentalism was not necessarily the enemy of the state or a subversive element in Egyptian society.¹¹³

On the other hand, the Brotherhood's relations with the government remained complicated; it was tolerated to a degree, but remained officially illegal. It was not allowed to distribute literature or assemble in public, and its members were subject to periodic arrests. Despite being outlawed, the Brotherhood had been able to take advantage of political and social developments in Egypt to increase its membership and influence. A consequence of this was that Islamic charitable organizations and private mosques flourished because even though many of these organizations are nonpolitical, it is largely within this decentralized network of associations pursuing different agendas and enjoying different degrees of autonomy from the state that dissent has been able to be expressed.¹¹⁴

The Brotherhood maintained its educational grassroots strategy of slowly effecting change rather than resorting to violence. As a result, Brotherhood activists gained some influence within the state bureaucracy, and the organization gained support from many doctors, teachers and administrators. Also, the Brotherhood was particularly successful in recruiting young people, including university students and recent graduates.

The Islamic revival that the Brotherhood offered provided a way of life in which young people could be respected for their piety and Islamic learning rather than for their social status. The belief that it is the duty of every Muslim to be involved in political and

¹¹³ Bianchi, p. 94.

¹¹⁴ Wickam, pp. numerous.

social reform can act as an antidote to political alienation and defeatism. Young people's work in the Brotherhood included supporting Brotherhood-backed candidates in elections in student unions, professional associations, government, and participating in demonstrations. In addition, women from lower-middle-class backgrounds have found that stricter adherence to Islamic religious observances provides them with increased respect in the community, which enables them to disregard other social codes that would otherwise limit their options in areas such as education, career and marriage.¹¹⁵

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Brotherhood-backed candidates gained large majorities on the executive boards of several leading professional associations, such as those representing lawyers, doctors, pharmacists, scientists and engineers, where they defeated government, secular, and militant Islamic candidates in competitive open elections. Brotherhood-sponsored plans included offering health insurance, low-interest loans and training to the undereducated and other sweeping social programs. However, the limited resources available to the professional associations meant that these programs were not very widespread and did not have any significant effect on the larger Egyptian population.

Nevertheless, these associations did give the Brotherhood a platform from which to criticize Egypt's lack of free parliamentary and presidential elections and to call for the repeal of the emergency law that imposed drastic limits on legal political opposition.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Wickham, pp. 36-62, 75-87, 164-171.

¹¹⁶ Wickham, pp. 178-199.

Parliamentary elections, though largely closed to the opposition, give some indication of the Brotherhood's popularity under Mubarak. In the 1984 elections, the Brotherhood was allowed to run candidates for the Wafd party, which won 65 out of 450 parliamentary seats. This election established the Wafd party as the largest opposition group in Egypt with Brotherhood members holding 7 of the 65 seats.¹¹⁷ Ironically, the new alliance between the Wafd party and the Muslim Brotherhood came about because of the opportunities which the leadership of the two organizations had had to mingle and associate with each other in prison during Sadat's crackdowns on opposition movements in 1981.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, the Mubarak regime would not allow legal recognition of the Brotherhood or even return the organization's headquarters or control over the publication of *al Da'wa* to the Brotherhood.¹¹⁹

In 1987 the Brotherhood was permitted to repeat the experiment in secular parliamentary politics, this time running candidates under the Socialist Labor Party and the Liberal Party. In this election, this new coalition, called the Islamic Alliance, won sixty seats in Parliament with the Brotherhood holding thirty-eight of those seats.¹²⁰ In both elections the party aligned with the Brotherhood received more votes than all the other opposition parties combined.¹²¹ The effect of this participation in parliamentary elections was that the Muslim Brotherhood became an active participant in the ruling political system. They were the opposition but by participating in the process, they gave

¹¹⁷ Voll, p. 386.

¹¹⁸ Ramadan, p. 172.

¹¹⁹ Ramadan, p. 173.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Wickham, p. 90.

it legitimacy. The *takfir* organizations, which sought an Islamic alternative to the Egyptian system, were thus left out in the cold, with no power or input.

In response to the Brotherhood's alarming level of influence the government again resorted to repressive measures. In 1993, professional associations were placed under direct state control; in 1998, hundreds of student Islamic activists were arrested just before student union elections; in 1995 and 1996, over a thousand Brothers were arrested. Several were sentenced to several years of hard labor by military tribunals. The primary charge against them was that they were members of an illegal organization that planned to overthrow the government.¹²²

The Brotherhood has made a comeback in recent years, as the old guard has gradually died off and its middle-generation leaders have become more influential within the organization. In 2000, the Brotherhood ran seventy-six parliamentary candidates and won seventeen seats despite the government's extensive media campaign against it and the arrest of several of its candidates shortly before the election.¹²³

In 2001, the Lawyers' Association held open elections for its executive board for the first time in five years. The Brotherhood chose to contest only a third of the seats, in order to avoid embarrassing the regime, but won all of them.¹²⁴

Most recently the Brotherhood has called for greater democracy in the Middle East and has begun participating in prodemocracy demonstrations. 'Abd al-Mun'im

¹²² Wickham, pp. 18, 200-216, 226.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 3.

¹²⁴ Ibid., pp. 221-226.

Abu'l-Futuh, one of the middle-generation leaders who is respected in the Brotherhood said:

The absence of democracy is one of the main reasons for the crisis here, in Egypt and the Middle East. The Muslim Brothers believe that the Western governments are one of the main reasons for the lack of democracy in the region because they are supporting dictatorships in the Arab and Islamic region in general, despite the fact that it has been proved that the absence of democracy and freedom is the reason for terrorism and violence.¹²⁵

In the November 2005 parliamentary elections the Muslim Brotherhood had a list of over 150 independent candidates (who had to run as independents since the Brotherhood is still banned as a political party). However, they were allowed to advertise their affiliation with the organization for the first time. The group decided not to field candidates in some of the constituencies where senior government officials were running, in order to maintain good relations with the government. In the three stages of elections held November 7, November 20, and December 1, the Muslim Brotherhood claimed eighty-seven seats in Parliament, thus more than tripling its presence in the government.

These results are interesting for a number of reasons. The Brotherhood obtained these results without having a clear program or policy. It is now in the spotlight and will be forced to define its political program and reaffirm its commitment to democratic reform.

Second, the candidates ran on Islamic slogans such as "Islam is the solution." The religious- based campaign was aimed at gaining the support of under-educated poor Egyptians who traditionally have not backed the Brotherhood. It appears to have worked.

¹²⁵ Ibid., pp. 222.

It will be interesting to see if the Brotherhood can maintain this support beyond the elections or whether it will return to being perceived as an elitist intellectually driven organization.

Third, the voter turnout was only about 25%. These numbers are a terrible indictment of the election's legitimacy and for the future of democratic reform in Egypt. In comparison, American voter turnout is 54% while many Western European countries boast high voter turnout, between 73% in Spain and 92% in Austria.¹²⁶ Something must be done to encourage more widespread participation in the political process by the average Egyptian citizen.

Finally, allegations of rigged elections and voter intimidation by the government must be addressed. The potential for real change to the process is extremely slim, at least in the near future. However, with its new high-profile image as the preeminent opposition group in the government the Brotherhood must focus attention on this issue and publicly appeal for real democratic reforms. If it does not, it risks losing the support of the many dissatisfied reformers and activists in Egyptian society.

Conclusion

The history of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt can be characterized by long periods of an adversarial relationship with the government involving repression and animosity followed by brief periods of cooperation. For the most part, the Brotherhood

¹²⁶ Mark N. Franklin's "Electoral Participation" found in *Controversies in Voting Behavior* (2001).

has been a peaceful intellectual organization whose long-term goals revolve around affecting change through winning over the masses through its social programs and educational programs. It advocates policies that include gradualism, moderation and constitutionalism. Occasionally, the radical fringe of the organization has become violent when the organization has been threatened by the state. Furthermore, during periods of government repression, the radical fringe developed a major following among mainstream fundamentalists, often undermining the nonviolent goals of the organization and inspiring more radical organizations. These violent elements were periodically purged from the organization following the moderation of relations between the Brotherhood and the state. Yet, the influence of the radical fringe continued to affect the militant fundamentalists for many years.

CHAPTER IV

THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD IN JORDAN

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I the mandated state of Transjordan was established almost as an afterthought to the mandate for Palestine. It was an almost entirely artificial construct without any common ethnic, geographic or political ties, and the territory also lacked any significant natural resources or possibilities for creating industrial infrastructure. Hence, the territory and later the state became economically dependent upon foreign aid, first from Britain and since the 1950s from the United States. By the 1970s oil rich Arab Gulf states had also become large contributors of foreign aid to Jordan. Estimates of foreign aid are as high as \$1.3 billion annually during the 1980s.¹²⁷ This artificial construction also meant that Jordanian identity had to be constructed from scratch. This nation, identity and state building process was a very fragile thing. The Muslim Brotherhood came to play a significant role in that process.

In this chapter we will first examine the twentieth-century history of Jordan and examine the role the Brotherhood played in maintaining the stability of the country and

¹²⁷Glenn E. Robinson, "Defensive Democratization in Jordan" *International Journal Of Middle East Studies* Vol.30, No.3 (1998): p.390.

promoting the legitimacy of the Hashemite family. We will see how this earned the Brotherhood special consideration under the law and a prominent role in Jordanian society.

Then we will examine how the dependence on foreign support left the Kingdom of Jordan economically vulnerable and largely beholden to external influences. Foreign dependence, combined with a lack of perceived legitimacy due to the artificial nature of the state led to a need for the Hashemite government to create ties to the population by creating the elements of a welfare state. The Hashemite rulers had to liberalize their economy while staying in tight control of the country. This led to a series of reforms that were not popular with segments of the population, including the Muslim Brotherhood. Liberalization was viewed as Westernization. The Islamic fundamentalists would continue to be bitterly opposed to what they perceived as pandering to the West.

We will examine how King Hussein and later King Abdullah II manipulated the electoral process to achieve their goals of liberalizing Jordan by marginalizing their detractors through the electoral process. Enfranchisement provided the Hashemite regime with further tools to manipulate the Jordanian population to serve their own purposes. King Hussein managed to marginalize the opposition by including them in a political process that had little real meaning. He then used their participation in the government to legitimize his rule and his government's policies. His successor and son, Abdullah II, has continued the process and included a plan for economic reform and globalization while abandoning some of his father's more radical political positions.

The Early History of Jordan

Jordan is not a nation-state in the sense that western European states are nation-states. There is no single ethnic or national group geographically or politically associated with the piece of territory called Transjordan created in 1921 by imperial Britain from their mandate on the territory of Palestine. However, the borders were artificial and encompassed a heterogeneous population including various Bedouin tribes, Circassians, Turks, Kurds, Armenians, and Chechens and Palestinians. The nation needed to create a Jordanian identity and then convince or coerce these groups to adopt it.

Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill installed the Hashemite family from northern Arabia to rule Transjordan after the young Abdullah moved into the region with a small band of loyal followers and threatened to provoke a conflict with French forces in Syria. Essentially, Abdullah made it clear that he could be a friend to Britain or a thorn in their side. Britain, more interested in the populated Levantine coast and the political hot potato of Zionism in Palestine chose to appoint Abdullah Emir of the mandate of Transjordan rather than have to oversee the area and its problems directly. The Transjordanian treasury consisted of British financial aid established on the basis of an annual subsidy.

A native civil service was gradually trained with British assistance. Still Abdullah ruled directly with a small executive council, much in the manner of a tribal shaykh. British officials handled issues of defense, finance, and foreign policy, leaving internal political affairs to Abdullah.

However, the new Emir and his followers, while Arab and Muslim, were still strangers in a strange land who then had to build a nation from scratch. Transjordan was not created to meet national aspirations of a given community in a common territory. The artificially-drawn boundaries outlined a new 'state' which had not previously constituted a definite political entity. These boundaries were imposed on different, unrelated population groups. Local leaders including prominent tribal chiefs, heads of the Circassian community, notables of traditional elite families, members of the emerging middle class, and urban elites, gradually became amenable to adopting the label of *Jordanians* when they realized the advantages for themselves if people's sense of identification with their immediate locale could be converted into national patriotism.

Furthermore, Transjordan lacked strong traditional competitors to Identity, namely pan-Islam and Pan-Arabism. The region was really regarded as being between the important places. It was on the caravan routes between the Mediterranean Sea and Damascus or Baghdad. Later, the rail lines running from Istanbul to the other great cities ran through it. However, the region was always viewed as no more than a way-point to destinations beyond. Therefore, the population that chose to call that region home were looked down upon by their cosmopolitan contemporaries. These biases led to a situation where the ulama of the region were not considered as important or as influential as their Egyptian or Syrian counterparts. With lack of prestige comes lack of influence. So, while Islam was a way of life to the average Transjordanian, it did not come close to transcending their local and tribal ties. Essentially, this was not fertile ground for Pan-Islamic sentiments or esoteric Islamic Fundamentalist ideology.

Yet, the nascent Jordanian identity was not self-evidently pro-Hashemite. Some of those leaders criticized Abdullah's role within the British designs, as well as his preference for foreigners in his governments, perceiving him as a puppet of the British. They also negatively viewed Abdullah's expansionist ambitions, suspecting that he regarded Jordan as a mere springboard for the take-over of other more appealing territories in Greater Syria.

Over the course of many years, Abdullah managed to turn the disadvantage of being a foreigner to Transjordan into an asset. As an outsider he owed no commitment to any specific region or to any specific community or tribe. On the face of it at least, had no reason to prefer a certain group or a certain sector of society. This allowed him to manipulate the population and to craft a Jordanian identity from scratch.

Abdullah emphasized three aspects of Jordanian-ness in his nation-building plan. First, Abdullah emphasized the Hashemite claim to being direct descendants of the prophet Muhammad. This, combined with the support of the Muslim Brotherhood from the late 1940s on, cemented the Hashemite religious legitimacy to rule.

Second, Abdullah promoted the image of the noble and romantic figure of the archetypal Bedouin as the cornerstone of Jordanian identity. This mythical image of a purer, pastoral Arab people dovetailed with the Hashemite ties to the Prophet, essentially establishing the Jordanian identity as the “true” Arab identity, free of adulteration and corruption with the rightful and legitimate descendent of Muhammad as their leader.

The third aspect of Jordanian identity that Abdullah used was to promote the 1916-1918 Arab Revolt. This event was popular throughout the Arab world because it

was viewed as an Arab led effort to overthrow the Turks who were widely perceived as having dominated the Arabs under their rule in the Ottoman Empire and who presided over the relative decline of the Muslim world when compared to the West. The popularity of the Arab Revolt also served to bolster the reputation of the Emir since the Hashemite families were the key leaders of the revolt. Finally, the Arab Revolt was a reminder of the close ties the Arabs of the greater Syrian area had to their British allies that had facilitated the revolt in the first place.

By emphasizing these three aspects of Jordanian identity and alternately giving each one more weight and importance as the situation demanded, Emir Abdullah began to craft a national identity out of the raw materials provided to him. At times he would use myth and legend to remind people of their noble Bedouin ancestry. Although Bedouins were not initially accorded the same rights as sedentary citizens, their culture was appropriated by the Jordanian government; it was reimagined and redefined, then labeled the authentic Jordanian traditional cultural identity.

At other times he would target their unity through religion. Securing the support of the Muslim Brotherhood in the early 1950s greatly contributed to these efforts. Still at others he would place greater weight upon the traditional tribal loyalties of the Jordanian people. Abdullah's greatest skill was knowing exactly which narrative was appropriate for each audience. Thus, by ensuring the backing and loyalty of the tribal system, Abdullah crafted his state institutions around tribal and Bedouin identity.

Independence and Statehood: The Palestinian Question

When the British Mandate came to an end in 1946 and Transjordan turned into an independent Kingdom, the Jordanian identity was adopted by most of her population. This identity was based on the common territory (which was separated from the neighboring countries by modern borders), the central administration, formed around the tribal system and the army and comprised of intensely loyal Bedouins. Finally, it consisted of a loyalty to King Abdullah and to the Hashemite Dynasty. Elements of Arabic and Islamic identities were interwoven throughout.

During the 1948 war Abdullah achieved some of his territorial ambitions. The Arab Legion took over parts of the West Bank, which were annexed and later formally incorporated into his Kingdom, which was subsequently renamed *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan* in 1950. While this added to the Kingdom less than 7% of territory it tripled the population. About half of the newcomers were refugees. The official policy encouraged the complete integration of the Palestinians in the Kingdom and gave them the option of full civil and political rights. At the same time the regime insisted on maintaining the hegemony of the Jordanians over the Palestinians. King Abdullah therefore adopted a policy (that King Hussein continued to follow after succeeding his grandfather to the throne in 1953) of 'controlled integration' that deliberately discriminated against the collective Palestinian body in the West Bank but not against the Palestinians as individuals in order to prevent them from taking advantage of their majority and challenge the political supremacy of the Hashemite establishment and his supporters in the East bank. A further problem was that the Palestinians tended to be

more cosmopolitan and generally had a higher level of education than their Jordanian counterparts. In a very real sense Jordan risked being overwhelmed by the Palestinian identity.

The Palestinian people continued to dream of liberating their homeland and called on the Arab states to assist them in achieving this goal. The issue of independent statehood or another expansion of the Jordanian borders would be decided based on principles of self-determination after liberation had occurred.

Essentially, Jordan wished to absorb Palestinian identity into a greater Jordanian identity and assimilate them into a new Jordanian identity that would continue to reinforce the Hashemite kingship and would legitimize any future territorial claims to Palestine occupied by Israel. The Palestinians did not have any desire to create a new identity. They wished for military aid in defeating Israel. The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan was caught in between. They fully supported the liberation of Palestine but history would show that they would not cross the king. Their national identity as Jordanians would transcend any pan-Arab or Pan-Islamic sentiments and when forced to choose sides, they would consistently side with the Hashemite throne.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan

The Muslim Brotherhood formed a branch in Transjordan in 1942 by religious minded Transjordanian tribal leaders who were impressed with the organization in Egypt. Their platform did not widely differ from that of the Egyptian organization and early on they were largely directed by the parent organization in Egypt until world events

overtook them. When Israel declared statehood in 1948, Jordan found itself on the front lines of the first Arab-Israeli war. The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood found their defining identity when they became ideologically committed to liberating the Palestinian people from Jewish Zionist occupation. Arab fighters affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood poured in from all over the Arab world, mostly from Egypt. The combined Arab forces were not successful but the Jordanian army and the Muslim Brotherhood fighters both performed better than expected in the conflict and Jordan annexed the West Bank.

Both economic constraints and government policy encouraged migration from the overpopulated West Bank to the under-populated East Bank. The educated Palestinians soon became the backbone of the urban middle class in Amman and other east Bank cities. The Palestinian people and the surrounding Arab states were still reeling from their loss to the new Zionist state of Israel. This situation made Muslim identity far more prevalent in Jordan than it had ever been before. Furthermore, the Egyptian banning of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1948 and the subsequent crack down on the organization caused many members to flee to Jordan where they received a warm welcome.

The regime in Jordan was eager to enhance its relationship with the Brotherhood since their goals of liberating Palestine from Israel dovetailed with the throne's desire to further expand the territory of Jordan across all of Palestine. In addition to territorial ambitions this favorable relationship continued because of the Jordanian King's need to secure popular and ideological support in his struggle against leftist and nationalist trends opposing the Jordanian monarchy.

At times of crisis, the Brotherhood proved to take the King's side against his enemies. This culminated in Nasser's attempt to overthrow the Hashemite throne. King Abdullah I was assassinated in 1951 and eventually succeeded by his grandson Hussein in 1952. Nasser became the driving force of the Pan-Arab movement known as Nasserism. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was an obstacle to his goals. This obvious threat to the Hashemite throne culminated in an attempted coup by Army chief of staff Abu Nuwwar backed by Nasserists and Ba'ath nationalists, probably in collaboration with the Jordanian Prime Minister Sulayman al-Nabulsi. The details of the coup attempt are not clear but during the crisis the Brotherhood held massive conferences and meetings to mobilize support for King Hussein, portraying him as the defender of Islam against Communism and atheism, and attacked his opponents as being pro-communist and un-Islamic. The relationship between the king and the Brotherhood became closer than ever after the crisis. He used to visit the Brotherhood headquarters frequently and when political parties were banned, the Muslim Brotherhood was granted special privilege to continue functioning as a social and charitable organization.

1964-1967

A few years after the coup attempt another crisis developed in Jordan. Hussein's attempts at integrating the Palestinian identity and the Jordanian identity into a single unified hybrid identity under Hashemite rule would be challenged with the establishment of the PLO in 1964. As the organization was founded following the unanimous resolution of an Arab summit, King Hussein could oppose neither it nor its activities in the West

Bank. That was the beginning of almost a generation long struggle over the issue of the Palestinian representation. The blunt activities of the PLO's chairman, Ahmad Shuqairi, among the West Bank Palestinians not only challenged Jordan's authority there but also threatened to shake the precarious Jordanian-Palestinian identity. Furthermore, the PLO's goals mirrored the core goals of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood but the PLO treated them as outsiders with suspect loyalties.

Almost immediately, trouble developed between the PLO and Hussein's government. Conflict arose because the PLO attempted to assume quasi governmental functions, such as taxing Palestinians and distributing arms to villagers in the West Bank and among the refugees, acts that infringed on Jordanian sovereignty.

Al Fatah and the PLO carried out raids and sabotage against Israel without clearance from either the United Arab Command or Jordan. These attacks, although planned in Syria, most often were launched into Israel by infiltration through Lebanon or Jordan. Israeli reprisals against selected West Bank targets became harsher and more frequent from May 1965 onward. Meanwhile, Syrian propaganda against Hussein became increasingly strident. In July 1966, when Hussein severed official endorsement and support for the PLO, both that organization and the Syrian government turned against him. The Muslim Brotherhood continued to support the Hashemite throne.

In reprisal for the terrorist attacks by the fedayeen (Palestinian guerrillas), in November Israel assaulted the West Bank village of As Samu. Public rioting against the Jordanian government's inability to protect its people broke out among the inhabitants of the West Bank. The levels of rioting exceeded any previous civil unrest. Hussein used the

army to restore public order. Political pressure against Hussein mounted, however, along with armed clashes on the Syria-Jordan border. King Hussein was forced to confront the PLO's challenge to his authority.

Regional tensions continued to escalate as well, culminating in the Arab-Israeli war of 1967. The Arab forces were soundly defeated by Israel. After only two days of combat, Jordan's army had been beaten. Hussein was determined to hold as much ground as possible in the event that a cease-fire was arranged and the fighting continued. By the time he agreed to a truce on June 7, Israeli forces had seized the West Bank and the Old City of Jerusalem. During the war about 224,000 new Palestinian refugees fled from the West Bank into Jordan. Furthermore, nearly half of the country's best agricultural land and its main tourist attractions and holy sights were now occupied by Israel.

The PLO and Black September

Following the 1967 War, Hussein's government faced the critical problems of repairing a shattered economy, providing for the welfare of the refugees, obtaining foreign aid, and rebuilding the armed forces. Internally, however, the major problem was the continuing confrontation with the several Palestinian guerrilla organizations, chief among them, the PLO.

The PLO had had no role in the June 1967 War. In light of the failure of the Arab states to defeat Israel, the Palestinians decided to adopt guerrilla warfare tactics as the most effective method of attacking and defeating Israel. In February 1969, Arafat, who remained the leader of Fatah, became head of the PLO.

Hussein viewed the militant organizations as foreign agitators. He still sought to be the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and he still sought to integrate them into a hybrid society. So, Hussein sought accommodation with the fedayeen and provided training sites and assistance as a way to address the wishes of the Palestinian people whom he was still courting.

In Jordan's internal politics, however, the main issue between 1967 and 1971 was the struggle between the government and the guerrilla organizations for political control of the country. In the refugee camps, the Palestinian guerillas developed a system that was nearly a state within a state. They easily acquired funding and weapons from both the Arab states and Eastern Europe and openly defied Jordanian law. The Muslim Brotherhood, while remaining loyal, were little help. While the Brotherhood was a religious organization the PLO was a political and Palestinian nationalist organization whose members were not susceptible to religious based arguments unless they furthered the goal of achieving Palestinian liberation.

As the guerrilla attacks against Israel increased, Israel retaliated quickly and with extreme effectiveness. In March 1968, an Israeli brigade attacked the Jordanian village of Al Karamah, said to be the guerrilla capital. Although the brigade inflicted damage, it was driven back and in the process suffered substantial losses. The incident boosted Palestinian morale and gave the PLO instant popularity within the Arab community. In reprisal, Israel launched heavy attacks on Irbid in June 1968 and on Salt in August. By late 1968, the main fedayeen activities in Jordan seemed to shift from fighting Israel to attempts to overthrow Hussein in Jordan.

A major confrontation between the Palestinian militants and the Jordanian government occurred in November 1968 when the government sought to disarm the refugee camps. Civil war was narrowly averted by a compromise that favored the Palestinians. The threat to Hussein's authority and the heavy Israeli reprisals that followed each guerrilla attack were unacceptable to King Hussein. There were occasional outbursts of fighting between the Palestinian militants and the army during the first half of 1970. In June 1970, an Arab mediation committee intervened to halt two weeks of serious fighting between them. On June 9, 1970, the Jordanian government and Arafat signed an agreement that favored the Palestinians. According to its provisions, the government allowed the militants freedom of movement within Jordan, agreed to refrain from antiguerrilla action, and expressed its support for the militants in the battle against Israel. In return, the guerillas pledged to remove their bases from Amman and other major cities, to withdraw armed personnel from the Jordanian capital, and to show respect for law and order.

However, by early September, the guerrilla groups controlled several strategic positions in Jordan, including the oil refinery near Az Zarqa. The fedayeen were also calling for a general strike of the Jordanian population and were organizing a civil disobedience campaign. Then the PFLP launched an airplane hijacking campaign. King Hussein viewed the hijackings as a direct threat to his authority in Jordan. In response, on September 16 he reaffirmed martial law and immediately ordered the fedayeen to lay down their arms and to evacuate the cities. On the same day, Arafat became supreme

commander of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), the regular military force of the PLO.

During a bitterly fought ten-day civil war, primarily between the PLA and the Jordan Arab Army, Syria sent about two hundred tanks to aid the fedayeen. On September 17, however, Iraq began a rapid withdrawal of its twelve thousand man force stationed near Az Zarqa. The United States Navy dispatched the Sixth Fleet to the eastern Mediterranean, and Israel undertook "precautionary military deployments" to aid Hussein, if necessary, against the guerrilla forces. Under attack from the Jordanian army and in response to outside pressures, the Syrian forces began to withdraw from Jordan on September 24, having lost more than half their armor in fighting with the Jordanians. The fedayeen found themselves on the defensive throughout Jordan and agreed on September 25 to a cease-fire. At the urging of the Arab heads of state, Hussein and Arafat signed the cease-fire agreement in Cairo on September 27.

The last few months of 1970 and the first six months of 1971 were marked by a series of broken agreements and by continued battles between the guerrilla forces and the Jordanian army, which continued its drive to oust the Palestinian militants from the populated areas. Persistent pressure by the army compelled the fedayeen to withdraw from Amman in April 1971. Feeling its existence threatened, Fatah abandoned its earlier posture of noninvolvement in the internal affairs of an Arab state and issued a statement demanding the overthrow of the Jordanian "puppet separatist authority." In a subsequent early May statement, it called for "national rule" in Jordan.

Again, the Muslim Brotherhood held massive conferences and meetings to mobilize support for King Hussein, portraying him as the father of Jordan and representing the militant Palestinians as foreign aggressors. Essentially, despite their platform based on liberating Palestine from Israeli occupation, the organization chose to side with the Hashemite throne over the PLO. The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood effectively declared themselves a purely Jordanian movement first.

On July 19, the government announced that the remainder of the bases in northern Jordan had been destroyed. Hussein became virtually isolated from the rest of the Arab world, which accused him of harsh treatment of the fedayeen and denounced him as being responsible for the deaths of so many of his fellow Arabs.

The events of this Civil War acted as a catalyst for Jordanian national identity. The Palestinian identity had proven too volatile to assimilate fully into Jordanian society. The agitation of the Palestinian militant organizations led to a clear division among the Arabs residing in Jordan. The Palestinian refugees provided an “other” to which East Bank Arabs could compare themselves. In short, the failed attempt to create a hybrid identity resulted in the strengthening of the separate identity. East Bank Arabs embraced Jordanian nationalism and condemned the Palestinians for bringing so much strife into the country. Furthermore, the isolation by the other Arab countries caused the Jordanians, who felt this was unjust, to band together even more. The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood had thoroughly demonstrated their loyalty to the throne and their commitment to Jordan first.

Liberalization

Over the last two decades Jordan has been gradually liberalizing. They have held four parliamentary elections (1989, 1993, 1997 and 2003) and King Abdullah II himself has professed plans to continue with these political reforms and the democratization process.¹²⁸ This pro-Western political and economic plan is a direct result of the internal strife instigated by Jordanian economic and social problems. Liberalization led to a redefinition of Jordanian identity that allowed for peace with Israel.

The influx of money from the Arab oil states in the 1970s combined with the aid received from the West led to a boom in Jordan and raised popular expectations of continued economic prosperity. The standard of living rose steadily and the patrimonial relationship of the welfare state prospered. Per capita GNP was around \$2000 annually by 1985 and Jordanians working abroad in the oil fields of the oil rich Arab countries sent more than a billion dollars back home annually.¹²⁹ Since foreign aid was the source of the revenue that was necessary to maintain this patrimonial welfare relationship with the population, and the very Jordanian identity was so fragile, the stability of the state itself became dependent upon its “rentier” relationship with foreign powers.¹³⁰

However, several serious problems had arisen by the 1980s. First, the United States cut off aid as a result of King Hussein’s refusal to sign a peace treaty with Israel and Egypt. Second, aid from the Arab oil states gradually dried up as that money was diverted to supporting Iraq in the Iran/Iraq war and finally, the oil boom of the 1970s

¹²⁸ <http://www.kingabdullah.jo>

¹²⁹ Robinson, p.390.

¹³⁰ John M. Roberts, "Defensive Democratization in Jordan" *Arab Studies Quarterly* Vol. 13, No. 3&4 (1991): pp. 387-410.

came to an abrupt end.¹³¹ By 1990 foreign aid was down to \$393 million, and remittances sent home by Jordanians working abroad dropped to \$623 million annually by 1989.¹³² The reality of the situation was that the Hashemite government did not have the necessary funds to maintain the welfare state and the bureaucratic system on which its legitimacy and stability was based.

This monetary crisis led to Jordan secretly turning to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to alleviate the crisis. The IMF demanded that Jordan embark upon a program of reform that included cutting both subsidies and state expenditures, both staples of the Jordanian welfare system.¹³³ In response, the government of Jordan was obliged to halt many large-scale construction projects, slash food and other subsidies, and significantly reduce public employment. Further demands by the IMF forced price increases on cigarettes, gasoline and alcohol and a ban on the import of all luxury items including electric appliances and automobiles.¹³⁴ King Hussein also attempted to revitalize the economy through sweeping liberalizing reforms but was unsuccessful due largely to corruption, incompetence and an entrenched political elite which was dependent upon the existing system.

Hussein's initial response to the rise in public discontent was to ease restrictions on the political process. In 1981 he increased membership of the National Consultative

¹³¹ Linda Schull Adams "Political Liberalization in Jordan" *Journal of Church and State* Vol. 38, Issue 3 (1996): pp. 507-528.

¹³² Robinson, p.390.

¹³³ Robinson, p. 389.

¹³⁴ Adams, p. 508.

Council (NCC) from sixty to seventy-five.¹³⁵ But since the NCC was only empowered to debate and discuss bills and had no authority to make laws, this increase in its membership did not appease the opposition's quest for democratic reforms.

The 1989 Election

The downward economic spiral, the increasingly austere demands of the IMF and the Hashemite government's inability to enact any successful reforms, culminated in mass rioting in April 1989. Perhaps what was most disturbing to King Hussein was that the rioting was centered in the traditional south and on the East Bank, both strongholds of support for his regime.¹³⁶ With the stability of the state in question King Hussein decided to embark upon a plan of political reform and controlled democratic liberalization, despite the fact that this was not widely called for or even part of the demands of the rioters, who were more concerned about inflation and the down-sizing of the welfare system. King Hussein perceived democratic liberalization as a preemptive strike, aimed at gaining public acceptance of the necessary cutbacks in the patrimonial system by offering greater political participation and creating a form of public discourse.

According to the Jordanian constitution, the legislative power resides with the King and the parliament. The latter is comprised of an upper house (Senate) of forty members appointed by the King and a Lower House (Chamber of Deputies) of eighty members elected by universal suffrage, with men and women over the age of eighteen

¹³⁵ The NCC was created in April 1978 to fulfill the legislative functions of the dissolved House of Representatives.

¹³⁶ Adams, p. 3.

eligible to vote. The King is head of state and has the power to ratify the laws and promulgate them, direct the government to enact and enforce bylaws and regulations, exercise judicial authority by Royal Decree, and inaugurate, adjourn, suspend and dissolve the lower house when he deems necessary. The King also appoints the Prime Minister and may dismiss him. In addition, he appoints the ministers and may dismiss them as well.

With these broadly based powers King Hussein was able to manipulate the election process, effectively ensuring a favorable outcome that supported his regime and his goals. First, Jordan had been in a state of emergency under martial law since the 1967 war; as a result of this and other measures there was virtually no free press. Most media was owned, subsidized or censored by the government, and criticism of the government was often harshly punished.¹³⁷ Political parties were also illegal so opposition groups like the Muslim Brotherhood had to form unofficial cooperatives.

Second, the electoral system was set up in such a way so as to ensure widespread inclusion of diverse segments of the population while discouraging coalitions from forming. The number of parliamentary seats was increased from sixty to eighty. On the other hand, a new system of allocations was introduced. In certain constituencies, a given number of seats were allocated to long standing minority communities like Christians, Circassians, Chechens and Bedouins, amounting to around thirty per cent of the total number of parliamentary seats, far in excess of their numerical representation in the population. Also, each constituency was represented in parliament by more than one

¹³⁷ Article 19, *Jordan: Democratization without Press Freedom*, 22 March 1994, p. 5.

seat; some were even allocated up to seven seats. Basically, representation was not on the basis of one vote per a person because voters in one constituency could be voting for as many as seven open seats, and would thus get to vote for multiple candidates depending on the number of seats allocated to the constituency. This system allowed for block voting.

Third, King Hussein managed to convince many diverse groups, often with opposing ideological goals, to participate in the election process. Palestinians, Islamists, tribal factions and urbanized Jordanians all participated in the elections, under the government's rules, thereby giving a *de facto* endorsement to the election and legitimacy to King Hussein's liberalization program. The big winners of the 1989 election, other than the King and his regime, were the Islamists. They picked up twenty of the contested seats and were closely allied with fourteen others.¹³⁸ However, rather than alarming the government or detracting from the King's authority, this result ultimately worked to his advantage. Since the parliament had no power, and the King could disband it at any time, they were no real threat. Instead, the Islamists became part of the system. They were no longer the opposition on the outside that could criticize the King for not basing Jordanian law on the Shar'ia. Now they were part of the government and eventually came to be perceived as being part of the inefficiencies and stagnation of the bureaucracy. Their credibility slipped, while the King managed to marginalize a major opponent and legitimize his liberalization program. These elections also saw the powerful monarch

¹³⁸ John M. Roberts "Prospects for Democracy in Jordan" *Arab Studies Quarterly* vol. 13, no. 3 (1991): p. 122.

acknowledge mistakes and the need for change. Islamic fundamentalists moved to the forefront of a newly relevant political arena, a revitalized parliamentary life, and the regime's vow to "modernize" Jordan by broadening political participation.¹³⁹

The 1993 Election

With the easing of tensions, the emergency regulations were frozen in 1989, and formally lifted in April 1992. This new freedom opened the way for the legalization of political parties and the introduction of new press laws. On July 5, 1992, Parliament formally legalized political parties. In August 1993, Parliament passed an amendment to the election law that adjusted Jordan's electoral system to the principle of "one person, one vote." In the 1989 elections, where voters had as many votes as there were seats to be filled within the constituency, not all voters had made use of all their votes. There was a widespread belief that voters in the 1989 elections cast one or two votes for candidates with whom they had family or kinship ties, and then cast ballots for members of the Muslim Brotherhood. These results led King Hussein to believe that the electoral system gave advantages to Islamist more than to loyalist candidates. Believing that most Jordanian voters felt loyalty to family and kin first and to political ideology second, Hussein decided to maintain the multimember districts but to change the law to where voters could only choose one candidate in their district.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Sa'di Walid. "Election results - a first look," *Jordan Times*, 11 November 1989.

¹⁴⁰ Abla Amawi, "The 1993 Elections in Jordan" *Arab Studies Quarterly* Vol 16 No. 3 (1994): pp. 16-36.

Hence the 1993 elections produced a much more balanced and representative mix of party representatives and independents than had been previously the case. The Islamic Action Front (an Islamist party including the Muslim Brotherhood) won 20% of the seats with around 17% of the votes, Independent pro-monarchists won 60% of the seats with 58% of the votes, and smaller groupings of independent Islamists, Leftist, Nationalist, and Fatah Movement candidates had minor representation.¹⁴¹

The 1993 election demonstrates that King Hussein's regime had recognized the potential obstacle posed by the Islamists to his future liberalizing plans. Hence he restructured the electoral process, under the guise of making it more fair, in order to undermine the growing power of the Muslim Brotherhood. In response, the Muslim Brotherhood entered into cooperation with several other fundamentalist organizations and founded the Islamic Action Front (IAF) to act as a political party in 1992.

Basically, King Hussein managed to eliminate a potential threat to the stability of his regime and the future of his liberalization program through a process of apparent democratic reform. The legitimacy of these changes was not questioned and the big losers, the IAF, legitimized the election simply by participating in the process.

The 1997 Election

The strong showing of loyalist candidates demonstrated support for King Hussein and his participation in the Middle East peace process. Islamists opposed any normalization of relations with Israel. However, a peace treaty with Israel was signed in

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

October 1994, angering the Islamists.¹⁴² Some among the IAF questioned the legitimacy of participating in the democratic process, although others felt that nonparticipation would be even more detrimental to the Islamist cause. The Muslim Brotherhood held a conference on January 22, 1996 to debate the issue of participation. It was the culmination of a lengthy debate that resulted in the Brotherhood and the IAF deciding to boycott the upcoming elections.¹⁴³

In a lecture titled “Islam and Democracy, Jordan and the Muslim Brotherhood”, presented at Kyoto University, Dr. Azam Tamimi argues that the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood had pursued a series of sophisticated measures in order to influence the voting in favor of a boycott. Due to internal rivalries and an identity crisis among the various fundamentalist movements the Muslim Brotherhood wished to marginalize the other organizations in the IAF and reaffirm the Brotherhood as the leaders of the Islamist movement in Jordan. In order to achieve this, the Muslim Brotherhood had to ensure that IAF members were removed from positions of power in the government and that was exactly what boycotting the political process achieved. Instead of becoming the political platform of the Muslim Brotherhood, the IAF became a competitor, or even an alternative.¹⁴⁴ By disempowering their own political party, and removing themselves from the political process, the Muslim Brotherhood essentially had no official say in Jordanian politics for the next several years.

¹⁴² Robinson, p. 403.

¹⁴³ Amawi, pp. 16-36.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

This fracture of the Islamist movement leading up to the 1997 election is important for two reasons. First, it demonstrated a continuing commitment to the democratic process on the part of a significant number of Islamists despite their losses in the 1993 election and the normalization of relations with Israel. This commitment was crucial in solidifying the legitimacy of King Hussein's democratic reforms.

Second, the emerging divisions among the Islamists removed one of the few tangible threats to the Hashemite power base. A disunited Islamist movement could not muster enough support to challenge any aspect of King Hussein's liberalization program. It was also unable to challenge the credibility of the democratic process, since it had already participated in it in the two previous elections. Through democratic reform and political maneuvering King Hussein had managed to get his opposition to turn on itself and effectively remove itself from the political arena.

The Muslim Brotherhood eventually decided to amend its position on the boycott of the electoral process and opted to take part in the local elections in July 1999. Boycotting the political process, no matter how limited and how restrictive, could no longer be an option.¹⁴⁵ Led by the IAF, fundamentalists made a respectable showing in these elections, winning in a few areas. These results led the IAF to validate the elections immediately and to declare its intention to participate in the next general elections, scheduled for 2001.¹⁴⁶ This was not without irony, since the opposition parties were supporting the democratic process put in place through the liberalization program of the

¹⁴⁵ Tamimi, *Azam Islam and Democracy, Jordan and the Muslim Brotherhood* (2006) .

¹⁴⁶ Ryan R. Curtis "Political Liberalization and Monarchical Succession In Jordan" *Israel Affairs* Vol 9 No 3 (2003): p. 134.

Hashemite regime while the traditional elites that always supported the regime were opposed to that program.

Liberalization Under King Abdullah

In 1999 King Hussein appointed his eldest son 'Abdullah ibn Hussein as crown prince and heir, replacing Prince Hasan, the King's brother, who had been crown prince since 1965. King Hussein, who had been treated for cancer for many years, died shortly afterwards, and Abdullah bin Hussein was crowned King Abdullah II. Many viewed the 1999 municipal elections as a test of the liberalization program of King Hussein that began in 1989, saw great advances in 1993 and survived the boycott of 1997.¹⁴⁷

The elites were divided between old guard traditionalists, mostly senior bureaucrats, tribal leaders and large land owners who preferred the established rentier or welfare system that had served them well in the past, and the 'new guard' of reformists who supported rapid moves toward liberalization and economic modernization in the form of free market reforms.¹⁴⁸ Jordan's old guard is rooted in the powerful intelligence agency that vets prime ministers and their cabinets. It views democracy as a danger, at least until the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is settled, when Jordanian Palestinians will be forced to choose between allegiance to Jordan or to a new Palestinian state. Reformers say Jordan cannot postpone political or economic change if it is to tackle poverty and meet the aspirations of a fast-expanding population, half of whom are under age 15. "People have

¹⁴⁷ Ryan, "Political Liberalization and Monarchical Succession In Jordan" pp. 133.

¹⁴⁸ Lamis Andoni "King Abdallah: In His Father's Footsteps?" *Journal of Palestine Studies* Vol. 29, No. 3 (2000): pp 77-89.

expectations of opportunity and freedom," the Minister of Planning, Basim Awadallah has said. "Reform is not a luxury. It is dictated by demographic reality."¹⁴⁹

King Abdullah wished to embark upon a plan to distance Jordan politically from the West Bank while still maintaining influence over East Jerusalem. This would satisfy the traditionalist but anger the reformists. He also wished to speed up the pace of market reform in order to prepare Jordan for globalization.¹⁵⁰ This would satisfy the reformists but alarm the traditionalists. In order for these two ideologically opposed plans to succeed the King needed either to gain the support of both factions of the elites, or to marginalize them, much in the same way as the Islamists had been marginalized in the 1997 election.

With traditionalists firmly entrenched in government the King's regime was secure, but any real progress towards liberalization and modernization was curtailed. Surprisingly, King Hussein had changed the line of succession from his brother whom he perceived as a meddler and more aligned with the traditionalists in favor of his son Abdullah who was loyal to the liberalization program. When King Hussein died and Abdullah assumed the throne, political opposition groups immediately petitioned him to roll back the restrictions, reform the election laws and resume the liberalization process. He made a point of meeting with the opposition leaders and the elites as well as other entities in a "national dialogue." In truth, few reforms were made.¹⁵¹ King Abdullah made some minor progress liberalizing the media, reforming the judiciary and improving

¹⁴⁹ Ibid

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ryan, "Political Liberalization and Monarchical Succession In Jordan" p. 131.

human rights. He accelerated the pace of reform in order to integrate Jordan into the global market and community. Jordan was admitted into the World Trade Organization in 2000 and a US-Jordanian Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was ratified in 2001.

King Abdullah has been especially active on issues of economic reform. For example, the government has enacted a series of laws to strengthen the private sector, gradually introducing new business opportunities to areas normally monopolized by the state as well as privatizing telecommunications, transport, and other government industries. As a result of such measures, Jordan's external debt has decreased to 75% of GDP, while its foreign currency reserves have grown to \$3.6 billion.

Rollback of Democratic Liberalization

However, the political climate of liberalization within Jordan slowed following the 1997 election, and in some cases it was rolled back. Unfortunately for the King, a result of the 1996 IMF-dictated increase in the price of wheat was that the price of bread nearly doubled overnight and riots, similar to those in 1989, ensued. Therefore the 1997 elections resulted in a Parliament dominated by traditionalists critical of the liberalization program but supportive of the regime. Although, traditionalists were unable to stop the liberalization process, they were able to contain it. Taking advantage of King Hussein's failing health and growing popular opposition to the liberalization process, the

traditionalists managed to infiltrate much of the liberalization program as well as the state security apparatus.¹⁵²

Just before his death, King Hussein enacted a series of harsh and repressive restrictions on the media and any criticism of the state, effectively rolling back many aspects of democratic reform. Following his father's example, Abdullah has repeatedly sacrificed democratic liberalization in favor of economic reform and globalization. For example, Jordan cracked down on Hamas and its leadership, many members of Hamas were deported, including those holding Jordanian passports. This obviously upset the Jordanians of Palestinian origin and was perceived as a direct attack upon their interests.¹⁵³ Perhaps the ultimate example of sacrificing democratic liberalization in favor of economic reforms was demonstrated in 2001 when King Abdullah disbanded parliament and postponed future elections citing "regional circumstances" as the reason. He feared that rising popular unrest over economic reforms and anger at the brutal tactics employed by the Israelis towards the Palestinians would undermine his economic program. Negative public opinion over the United States' invasion first of Afghanistan and then of Iraq led to further postponements of the elections.¹⁵⁴ Abdullah's plans to liberalize the economy, normalize relations with Israel, secure Western aid and loans to shore up the bankrupt economy, and support the US war against Iraq were bitterly opposed. As workers took to the streets in support of the Palestinians, Abdullah outlawed

¹⁵² Curtis Ryan & Jillian Schwedler. "Return To Democratization Or New Hybrid Regime?" *Middle East Policy* Vol. 11, No. 2 (2004.): pp. 142-143.

¹⁵³ Andoni, pp. 77-78.

¹⁵⁴ Ryan, "Political Liberalization and Monarchical Succession In Jordan" pp. 134-140

public demonstrations and banned public meetings to prevent opposition organizations, such as the IAF from gaining power. This was essentially a return to the political atmosphere of 1989.

Abdullah took these shocking steps for two reasons. First, while the traditionalists dominated the parliament and secured the stability of the Hashemite regime, they often worked to undermine or contain the globalization program that the King regarded as vital to the future of Jordan. Second, divisions within the Jordanian elites between tribal-led traditionalists and urban reformers also undermined their power by dividing their support base. Therefore, if elections were to be held on schedule, it was highly likely that the opposition forces would be very successful. This success of the opposition would put the stability of the regime in jeopardy and undermine Abdullah's pro-Western economic and globalization programs. Basically, King Abdullah decided that the economic liberalization program was more important than illusions of democratic liberalization. Since the economic program was in jeopardy he decided to use his power to remove all obstacles to achieving his goals, specifically Islamists, Palestinians and traditionalists. Since both his supporters and his opponents were divided and fighting amongst themselves the dissolution of parliament did not cause many problems.

The electoral delays were symptomatic of the broader crisis between the government and the opposition, and indeed between the regime and Jordanian society, over the entire program of political liberalization and economic reform. When King Abdullah first came to the throne, Jordan's domestic and regional climate actually appeared to be stable and

the King did not hesitate to allow municipal elections to take place in 1999 as scheduled. The results of the election and the political landscape led the King to roll back democratic reforms and suspend the parliament, creating an authoritarian state. His purpose was not to stop the liberalization process but shifted the emphasis towards a program of economic reform and globalization was unpopular among both supporters and opponents of the regime. Basically, he had to suspend the democratic process in order to ensure that Jordan would continue forward with the liberalization process and improve its standing in the international arena.

Liberalization During the Democratic Crisis

Despite the extreme measures taken by the regime to eliminate virtually all dissent within Jordan, several advances were made in the general direction of political and social liberalization. In October 2002, Abdullah II launched a campaign to mobilize the country under the slogan "Jordan First." Thus economic development, modernization and incremental political reform would take precedence over the "external" concerns, such as Palestine, that had characterized King Hussein's rule. This slogan represented the regime's nationalist approach and its intention not to tolerate any exploitation of the divisions within Jordanian society, both between the elites and the Islamists, and between Palestinians and East Bank Jordanians. It also represented a rejection of any commitment to broader Arab or Islamic concerns.¹⁵⁵ The Jordan First movement was a statement that

¹⁵⁵ Curtis Ryan, "Liberalization and Deliberalization In Jordan" Perihelion. Online Journal of the European Rim Policy and Investment Council (ERPIC) February 2003

the King's program of economic reform and pro-Western globalization was the government's top priority, and this program was presented as part of a patriotic or nationalist agenda.

Another example of liberalization making progress in the face of the harsh, anti-democratic policies of King Abdullah's regime was in the field of women's rights. Since the coronation of King Abdullah II in 1999, the monarchy has been generally protective of women's organizations and has shown interest in working to improve the status of women in Jordan. While the Parliament was suspended between 2001 and 2003, the government took the opportunity to amend two bills related to women's rights. The first allowed women the right to file for divorce and the second gave the courts more leeway in imposing harsh punishments on those who commit honor crimes. The 1999 parliament had decided to retain impunity for those convicted of honor killings. The new House of Representatives rejected these amendments to the Civil Status Law and the Penal Code. According to the new law the age of marriage for men and women, which had been 16 and 15, respectively, was raised to the age of 18. In addition, the children of Jordanian women and non-Jordanian men were now entitled to Jordanian citizenship. There had been little public demand for an emphasis on increased women's rights, yet King Abdullah unilaterally pushed forward many of these provisions, most likely to respond to what he perceived as western opinion of Jordanian society. Perhaps providing more civil liberties to women was a public relations move enacted in order to move Jordan closer to Western ideals and sensibilities. However, despite the motivation for the measures the

end result was increased protection and participation in civil society for Jordanian women.

A third example of liberalization occurring under King Abdullah concerns the media. King Hussein had significantly cracked down on media criticism of the state and its policies after the 1993 elections, and Abdullah had followed his father's lead, often suppressing dissent and criticism of his policies. Members of the media also spoke of editorial censorship, fear of dismissal for reporting on contentious issues, and increased self-censorship. Jordan adopted new penal codes shortly after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States under the guise of combating terrorism. These new laws allowed the government to jail and fine journalists and close publications that committed a number of very broadly defined offenses. These powers have been widely abused by the state security.¹⁵⁶

However, King Abdullah promised a number of initiatives aimed at modernizing the local media. In 2001, he called for the abolition of the Ministry of Information, which regulated the media and enforced restrictions on the press. The ministry was eventually abolished in October 2003 and was replaced by the High Media Council, a twelve member supervisory body with an ambiguous mandate, including recommending media policy to the government. In December 2002, the King ordered the reformation of the High Media Council with the aim of making it more independent of executive control.

¹⁵⁶ Center for the Protection of Journalists (CPJ).

In December 2003, the government created a new licensing system for private radio and television stations, ending the state's monopoly on broadcast media. Several laws have been enacted, modified, or abolished to detach state media organizations from direct government control through the establishment of independent boards to run them, including the Board of Directors of the Radio and Television Corporation. The government also sold its shares in the daily newspapers as an assurance of its determination to liberalize the sector. Laws have been passed to allow private TV and radio stations to operate in Jordan, with two such licenses already granted.¹⁵⁷ Also, The Qatar-based satellite channel al-Jazeera banned in Jordan in 2002, was allowed to resume broadcasting in March 2003.

Despite government intimidation and a history of censorship of the media Jordan has far more freedom of the press than most of its neighbors. Furthermore King Abdullah has repeatedly asserted his goal of achieving a free media within Jordanian society.¹⁵⁸ The motivation for this may also be to align Jordan more closely with its western allies but yet again the end result is a freer and more liberal society. Credit should be given to King Abdullah since these liberalizing reforms were enacted during the suspension of the democratically elected parliament.

In June 2003, elections were finally held under yet another electoral law. The new law, announced in July 2001, lowered the age of voting eligibility for men and women from 19 to 18, and increased the number of parliamentary seats from 80 to 104, with new

¹⁵⁷ <http://www.kingabdullah.jo>

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

(but still uneven) electoral districts. In February 2003, King Abdullah added to the changes with a new decree adding six more parliamentary seats in a specific quota to ensure minimal representation for women. Ironically, the IAF had originally opposed the women's quota, but then included a woman, Hayat al-Musayni, among its slate of thirty candidates. al-Musayni turned out to be the top vote-getter among women candidates overall. Thus in an ironic twist, the first woman seated in the new 2003-2007 parliament was a conservative Islamist activist.¹⁵⁹ The IAF succeeded in getting seventeen of its party members elected (including al-Musayni); aside from the IAF, five independent Islamists whom the IAF had expelled from its ranks just before the election were also elected. Most of the parliamentary seats, however, went to traditional tribal leaders or former government officials, and at least 62 seats out of one 110 went to loyalist proregime figures.¹⁶⁰ Voter turnout stood at 59% of eligible voters, with few mishaps or irregularities, in spite of systematic gerrymandering. The king also required that all candidates be "independents" rather than party members. King Abdullah had learned his father's trick of ensuring a favorable government by manipulating the voting system.

2007 Elections

Elections for the Chamber of Deputies were held on November 20, 2007. Again, six seats were reserved for women, nine for Christians and three for other minority groups. The IAF again participated in the elections, running twenty-two candidates of

¹⁵⁹ Ryan, "Political Opposition, Democracy And Jordan's 2003 Elections."

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

which only six were elected.¹⁶¹ There were the usual accusations of voter fraud, vote buying and electoral manipulation intended to ensure that independent loyalists won. However, the IAF does not appear, at this time, willing to take any action more serious than calling for independent monitors. Therefore, the results seem likely to stand.

It is interesting to note that out of 880 candidates running for 110 seats, 199 were women running for the six seats designated for women.¹⁶² The IAF was also confronted with voter apathy, turnout was only around 54% and economic concerns were voter's primary interest rather than the social and political issues that dominate the IAF's platform. In the BBC article cited above, a disillusioned voter quoted by Associated Press said: "I'm not voting for anyone because they're all liars - Islamists and all the others. They just want to grab seats in parliament and will forget about us and our needs."

This quote clearly demonstrates that the participation of the IAF in previous governments has managed to firmly associate it with the regime. It is the loyal opposition and is perceived by the Jordanian public as part of the problem and not the solution. Furthermore, the government was able to further marginalize the IAF by decreasing its participation in government from seventeen seats in Parliament to only six. By achieving this through a generally fair election process the government also increased its own legitimacy in the eyes of the international community.

The Jordanian government has managed to incorporate the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamists into the political system on its own terms. It provides the Islamists

¹⁶¹ "Large election losses for Jordanian Islamists" Al Jazeera, 22 November 2007.

¹⁶² "Jordan Holds Parliamentary Vote" BBC World News, 20 November 2007.

with limited access to a public forum which allows them to express their point of view to the community. Yet at the same time the government has so far ensured that the Islamists have never achieved any real level of power in the regime. This arrangement has led to peaceful cooperation between the government and Islamic fundamentalists that legitimizes both parties. In a sense, compromising with moderate fundamentalists while liberalizing the society has led to a more peaceful and more stable Jordan.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The principal Islamist movements in Egypt and Jordan are not preoccupied with the structure or form of government, and monarchy, democracy, socialism, etc. are irrelevant to them. Their primary concern is the moral and ethical behavior of the society through adherence to defined religious behavior. The Islamist interaction with the state can be characterized as more or less successful attempts to get the government to enact some sort of the Islamically-based legal code and promote Islamic norms of behavior. They wish to achieve this through a gradual transformation of society by means of social and educational programs and participation in the political process. However, when denied these avenues, or when threatened directly by the state, the Muslim Brotherhood has been willing to resort to violence. What has prevented it from becoming a full-blown militant Islamist organization seeking to overthrow the secular governments has been their limited local inclusion in social and political matters and their desire to explore those avenues first.

In Egypt the Brotherhood has thrived in the social and political arena despite numerous government attempts to repress and dismantle it. Each attempt by the government to destroy the Brotherhood was met by stiff resistance. The government

never succeeded in silencing the Brotherhood or in eliminating the Islamist movement. In fact, repression seems to have had precisely the opposite effect, since government crack-downs led to a radicalization of the organization and to violent conflict. Rather than establishing stability, the government created instability. Furthermore, the government lost credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of many who were sympathetic to the Brotherhood. Every attempt by various governments to control the opposition movements in Egypt led to less peace and less stability which was only rectified through a de-escalation of the tension and the reestablishment of limited participation by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egyptian society and politics.

The experiences of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan are vastly different from those in Egypt. Since the Brotherhood in Jordan has entered into a symbiotic relationship with the state, stability was achieved and peace maintained through cooperation and tolerance between the government and the Brotherhood that provided both entities with legitimacy. Jordan is a unique case study which demonstrates how Islamist organizations and modern nation-states can cooperate and even participate in government institutions. This suggests a promising potential for the emergence of multi-party systems of government and the acceptance of loyal opposition parties that include participation from the Islamist organizations in the wider Muslim world. Furthermore, the Jordanian government was able to enact liberalizing policies, including women's suffrage, that the Islamists opposed while they cooperated with them.

Compared to the trials and the hardships faced by their counterparts in other Middle Eastern countries it appears that the Jordanian Brotherhood has found a happy

balance of state loyalty, democratic practice and Islamic principles. The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan has occasionally objected publicly to government actions but has chosen to express itself in forms of public discourse rather than endorsing action against the government. The recent participation by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egyptian elections suggests that other Islamists may be willing to explore the possibility of following the Jordanian model.

These two case studies demonstrate that allowing limited participation in government and civil society is probably the most effective method of preventing Islamic fundamentalist organizations from radicalizing and adopting an extremist position that promotes rebellion against the state. Both the Egyptian and the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood have demonstrated a willingness to play by the rules established by the government. Limited participation without harsh repressive measures on the part of the state provides Islamist groups with a platform from which they can express their views peacefully. Participation in the government apparatus gives the Islamists a vested interest in supporting the government, which promotes stability, encourages compromise and discourages radicalization. At the same time, this arrangement also creates a degree of legitimacy for the state. Furthermore, by associating the opposition with the system it provides a mechanism by which the state can marginalize the opposition, effectively making it part of the problem rather than an alternative solution, as demonstrated in Jordan.

Finally, by allowing moderate, nonviolent Islamic fundamentalist organizations to exist, the state is providing a peaceful alternative to the violent, radicalized movements.

Though militant Islam will still hold an appeal for a small minority, many potential supporters can be siphoned off if they have a peaceful alternative avenue in which to express their fundamentalist, reformist views. Repression only fuels the popularity of violent movements.

The government of Egypt's reaction to the Brotherhood seems entirely out of proportion. The government did not distinguish between the radical militant organizations and the moderate nonviolent movements. At times, the government appears to fear the influence and the successes of the nonviolent organization more than they fear the potential of a violent rebellion. The Muslim Brotherhood must gradually be folded into the political realm and perhaps be marginalized by being 'part of the problem' rather than the solution, much as Jordan has done.

Ultimately, the role of the Muslim Brotherhood in a modern Arab state will have to be determined by those states. Both Egypt and Jordan have achieved political and social stability and both of their regimes are firmly entrenched. Now would be the time to move towards increasing fundamentalist inclusion in the government and society while it can be controlled and the message can be kept moderate. Yet, recent events in both Egypt and Jordan show the governments moving in the opposite direction. In response, the Muslim Brotherhood, in both countries, have retreated into more conservative and potentially more radical rhetoric. If they do not learn from their past experiences, Egypt risks a repeat of the cycle of suppression, repression and violence. Jordan risks moving backwards and losing that working relationship they have achieved with the Muslim

Brotherhood. That could only lead to destabilization of the country and the Hashemite regime.

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